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Clash in Silwan
Two Palestinians fight off settlers arriving at a building purchased by other settlers in the eastern Jerusalem village of Silwan yesterday. Story, Page 2

IDF-south Lebanon liaison commander: Calls for unilateral pullout endanger troops

By ARREH O'SULLIVAN

REIHAN, South Lebanon — In a stinging and unprecedented attack, a high-ranking IDF officer in the security zone said Israelis calling for a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon are endangering the lives of soldiers serving there.

"They are certainly a threat to IDF soldiers," said Brig.-Gen. Erez Gerstein, commander of the IDF liaison unit to Lebanon. "Anyone who is demonstrating today in Israel for a unilateral withdrawal — for the army to 'about face' — from Lebanon without any agreement being reached is creating a threat to lives in the field."

Asked if he sees a direct link between the protests in Tel Aviv, by groups like the Four Mothers or the Movement for a Peaceful Departure from Lebanon, and the dangers he faces in south Lebanon, Gerstein said: "I see a direct link... I'm not the least bit embarrassed to say this, because it sometimes threatens me personally."

MK Yossi Beilin (Labor), a founder of the Movement for a Peaceful Departure from Lebanon, reacted to Gerstein's comments by calling on Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak to

instruct IDF commanders to stay out of political matters.

"The role of IDF officers is to carry out the directives of the government," Beilin said in a statement. "IDF officers have no role in encouraging movements or opposing them."

Four Mothers chairwoman Rachel Ben-Dor said, "The movement is not dealing with ways of pulling out of Lebanon, but only demands that the politicians put an end to the deaths in this superfluous war. We were under the impression that it is permitted today to speak and not just to die. The defense minister, the former chief of general staff, and OC Northern Command have all said publicly that the protest is legitimate and does not harm anybody."

Speaking bluntly during a visit inside the security zone, Gerstein, an ex-commander of the Golani Brigade who has seen years of service in Lebanon, said Hizbullah has taken a blow from the IDF and SLA forces along Israel's last active front.

Hizbullah has lost at least 40 fighters so far this year, including 10 in the past two weeks alone, according to IDF body count. The IDF and SLA each have lost five fighters.

According to Gerstein,

Hizbullah's ranks have become so decimated of veteran fighters it can no longer mount any sustained attack on outposts or soldiers in the security zone, and so most of its attacks are from mortars.

Gerstein, who was appointed just three months ago, is the officer with the closest contacts with the Israeli-financed SLA and serves out of a headquarters in Marjayoun. He supervises Israeli and SLA activities in the security zone.

Gerstein said he was satisfied with the performance of the militiamen in the SLA's six battalions.

At the SLA outpost in Reihan, about 20 kilometers north of Metulla, SLA militiamen proudly displayed their artillery skills by pounding the nearby Sujud Ridge, a favorite Hizbullah hideout, with rounds from their 160 mm mortars, D-120 mm cannons and T-55 tanks. Some cheered as smoke billowed from the ridge to the east.

Israel pays the salaries of the 2,500-man militia led by Gen. Antoine Lahad. Wages are between \$460 and \$550 a month, which is considered a very good salary in south Lebanon and the main reason most SLA soldiers give for signing up.

Over the years, some of the

security zone's 80,000-100,000 residents have become dependant on Israel. Over 2,000 currently work in Israel daily and the government invests between \$32-\$40 million annually there.

Gerstein said residents there are "very concerned" with the possibility of a unilateral Israeli withdrawal.

Israel's acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 425 and attempts to work out a negotiated withdrawal helped allay fears in the SLA that the IDF was going to get up and leave, Gerstein said, but the growing momentum of the public debate of the IDF's presence in Lebanon is causing some SLA fighters to question their continued loyalty.

"You must understand that someone who is afraid you will get up and leave him in a unilateral action won't be prepared to work with you and may well go to the other side," Gerstein said. "Anybody with a minimal sense of logic knows this."

He also said that Hizbullah, while in a state of operational weakness, was being given comfort and encouragement from the street protests in Israel.

David Rudge contributed to this report.

Hamas expects Yassin to return this week

By MARGOT DUKOVITCH and JAY BUSHINSKY

As Israeli government officials weighed whether to allow Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to return to Gaza, Hamas officials said yesterday their spiritual leader is expected to return to Gaza on Thursday or Saturday.

Yassin's desire and intention to return to the Gaza Strip preoccupied the security cabinet yesterday. However, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon failed to reach a consensus as to whether the paraplegic Hamas leader should be allowed to return from his fundraising trip to Arab and Islamic countries, that culminated in a stop in Khartoum.

Netanyahu presumably told the two ministers what he later said to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: All of the officials who deal with national

security recommended that Yassin be allowed to come back.

Neither Mordechai nor Sharon expressed their opinions publicly on this matter, however.

Netanyahu quoted his security aides as contending that the damage that might be caused by Yassin

between a rock and a hard place, Page 4

were he to become an exiled leader would surpass that which might result from his return to the Gaza Strip.

The issue of Yassin's return to Gaza is "of utmost sensitivity and is being discussed in closed security forums. I will conclude the discussions and take a decision," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said after a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday.

President Ezer Weizman said he thought authorities should let Yassin return to Gaza, where Israel and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat could keep an eye on him.

"I would let him [back]," Weizman told reporters, "so he doesn't run wild all around the world. It's better that he stay in Gaza, close to us — and I assume Arafat will decide how to handle him — than run around in Karachi and Saudi Arabia and all these places."

Yassin, who is reportedly suffering from exhaustion, decided to cut short his trip and cancelled plans to visit Malaysia, Iraq and Pakistan. Sources, however, said Yassin was forced to cut short his plans because Iran refused him entry. The sources said the Iranian government issued a statement declaring "the present situation does not allow for a visit at this time."

See YASSIN, Page 2

Histadrut elections today

In the final run-up to today's Histadrut election, Chairman Amir Peretz and his challenger MK Maxim Levy used their press conferences to exchange accusations and express confidence in their success.

Peretz said his list, Am — which formed a coalition with Labor, the Likud, Shas, Yisrael Ba'aliya, and the Democratic Arab Party — is proof there is no politics when it comes to the good of the workers, and this will enable him to face any government.

Peretz blasted the government's indifference to the plight of the unemployed and the workers, promising to fight relentlessly against unemployment, personal contracts, personnel companies, and privatization without consulting the workers.

The leaders of the Gesher-Meretz list — MKs Maxim and David Levy (Gesher), Yossi Sarid,



Candidates in today's vote, Amir Peretz (left) and Maxim Levy (Ilan Ossendryver/Israel Sun)

Ran Cohen, and Anat Maor (Meretz) — attacked Peretz for using Histadrut facilities and personnel in his election campaign and charged him with corruption.

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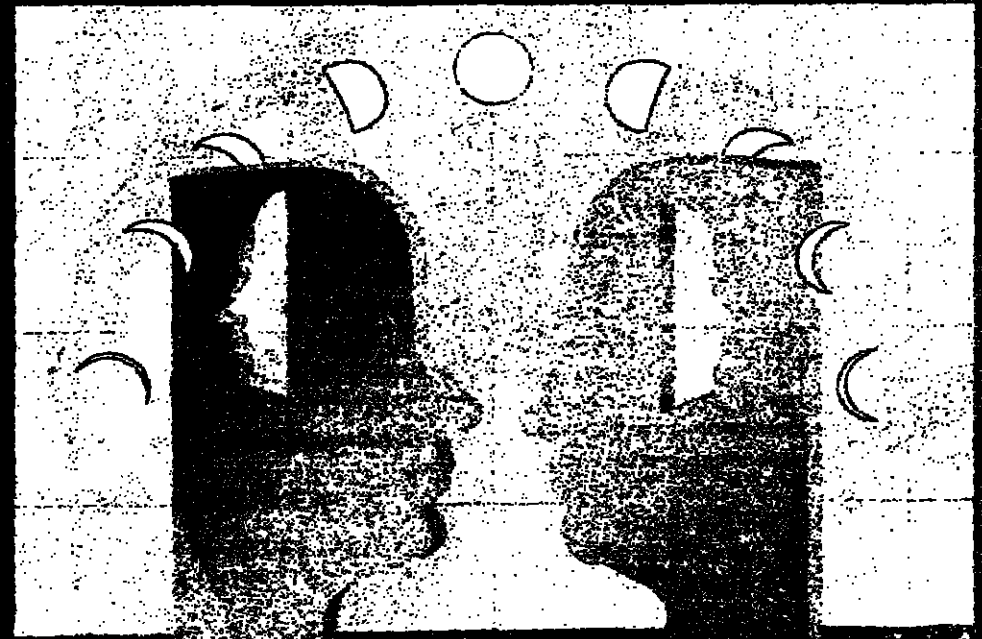
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NEWS

in brief

Gov't sells 4% of shares in UMB for NIS 90m.

The Treasury announced last night it has successfully completed the sale of four percent of shares in United Mizrahi Bank, raising NIS 90 million. In a statement, Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman congratulated Accountant-General Shai Talmon and MI Holdings, the government company charged with selling the banks. "This shows the remarkable faith foreign investors have in the Israeli economy," Neeman said. The government said last night it hopes to raise at total NIS 800 million by the time the sales are completed in 1999. *David Harris*

Mordechai meets with settler leaders

Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai met with members of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza last night and updated them on the negotiations and government strategy to push the peace process forward. He stressed that no settlements would be harmed. Mordechai's media adviser Avi Benayahu said the settlement leaders talked of the good working relationship they have with Mordechai and of the present stable security situation in Judea and Samaria. *Margot Dudkevitch*

Six Palestinians hurt in explosion

Six Palestinians were injured, two of them seriously, by an explosion yesterday in the village of Jalbun, east of Jenin, in the northern West Bank. Palestinian security forces said the explosion was caused by a mine left in the area by the IDF. The IDF Spokesman confirmed the six injuries and said the Palestinians were playing with a flare gun that apparently dropped from an IAF plane and ignited. *Margot Dudkevitch and Mohammed Najib*

Bentsur to discuss peace process in Russia

The peace process will top the agenda of Foreign Ministry Director-General Eytan Bentsur's talks with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Victor Possovayuk in Moscow today. Possovayuk is one of the Kremlin's top experts on the relationship between Israel and the Arab states. "Strategic political challenges in the regional arena" also will be discussed by the two and their aides, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. *Jay Bushinsky*

Canada to fund peace projects

Canadian Minister for International Cooperation Diane Marleau yesterday committed her country to several "community-based efforts" intended to advance the peace process. Speaking at the Peres Center for Peace, Marleau said Canada will contribute \$72,000 towards its Peace Infomatech, an Israeli-Palestinian training facility. *Jay Bushinsky*

Unifil lodges complaint over SLA mortar fire

Unifil has lodged a strong complaint with the IDF over an incident last Thursday in which a mortar round fired by South Lebanese Army gunners hit a position manned by Nepalese troops of the international peace-keeping force. The incident happened near Haris village, north of the security zone, and caused extensive damage but no casualties. Unifil Spokesman Timur Goksel said the round hit the sleeping quarters of the troops, which was empty at the time. *David Rudge*

Border Police officer killed in head-on crash

A Border Police officer was killed in a head-on crash with a truck on the road from Afula to the Megiddo junction early yesterday morning. Police said Chief-Inspector Yoni-Tov Ron, 25, was driving a Border Police jeep, which apparently swerved out of its lane and collided with the truck coming in the opposite direction. The lorry driver was lightly hurt. *David Rudge*

Moves into Silwan spark clash

By MARGOT DUDEKOVITCH

A further move of Jews into Silwan yesterday sparked a clash between Arab residents of the east Jerusalem village. Palestinian activists, and Peace now members and members of the Elad settlement group.

The day began when residents of Silwan woke up to find that during the night Elad members had begun refurbishing four homes in preparation for occupation. While three of the homes had been unoccupied for a long time, settlers began removing furniture and belongings from the fourth and erected a fence around it. Jerusalem police chief Cmdr. Yair Yitzhaki said Elad had informed the police of its plans and that the purchase of the properties and all the preparations carried

ried out by the association were completely legal.

At approximately 3 a.m., Elad members, accompanied by Eli Geva, the association's lawyer, who was armed with the necessary papers to prove ownership, began moving in. Several hours later, Peace Now activists, accompanied by Palestinian Authority Minister for Jerusalem Affairs Faisal Hussein and other Palestinians, including Palestinian Legislative Council members, arrived.

Their first stop was a home at the village entrance, which Elad said it owns. But that is being contested by the Karasen family, whose members say they have all the necessary papers to prove their claim.

"I will surrender my life before I surrender my house," Fatima Karasen, 62, shouted.

As the settlers removed furniture and other belongings and started erecting a fence, locals attacked them and a scuffle ensued.

Hussein and other Palestinians entered the building via the roof and Peace Now activists gathered at the site and refused to move. As tempers flared — clashes included kicking and fistcuffs — police removed the Peace Now activists from the site. Hussein was injured in the head by a stone, as was one of the settlers.

"I don't have any problem if Jews own the houses and want to live here," Hussein said, "but at the same time Palestinians who own even one centimeter of property in the western sector of the city must also be allowed to return."

Elad activist Yehuda Mali charged that the presence of

extremists only provoked the situation and forced the locals, with whom they are on good terms, to act. "If they don't react they will be considered suspected collaborators and will be killed," he said.

Mali said the organization first started purchasing buildings in Silwan in 1985 and 17 families live there. Once the homes are refurbished, he added, there will be 21 families living in seven buildings in different parts of the village.

"Over 50 percent of Silwan, or the City of David, including archeological sites, is in Jewish hands," he said. "We do not take up residence until all the required permits are authorized and the deal is proven 100 percent legal."

Elad also recently purchased a one-dunam lot and yeshiva students set up a makeshift tent, where

they prayed throughout the day to maintain a presence on the site.

"What's the big deal?" Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said. "Jews moved into their houses — a perfectly natural phenomenon."

PA cabinet secretary Ahmed Abdul Rahman warned there will be no peace or stability as long as the settlement policy, and the appropriation of Palestinian houses by force, continues. He accused the Israeli government of standing behind the move and said: "We are ready to defend our realities in Jerusalem, especially in Jerusalem, however many sacrifices it will take."

Meanwhile, the Antiquities Authority began excavations at the site owned by Ateret Cohanim near Herod's Gate.

Mohammed Najib contributed to this report.

3 coalition MKs submit new conversion bill

By LIAT COLLINS and HANAN SHAPIRO

MKs Alex Lubotzky (Third Way), Roman Bronfman (Yisrael Ba'Aliya), and Eliezer Zandberg (Tsimet) have submitted a bill calling for the implementation of the Neeman Committee's recommendations on conversion.

This includes creating special colleges for Jewish studies reflecting all streams of Judaism in Israel and creating special religious courts for conversion. The Chief Rabbinate would set up the courts, which would convert only according to Halacha.

However, the head of a haredi-oriented world body on conversion yesterday warned Israeli parents who had adopted foreign children that neither Rabbi Haim Druckman nor anyone else could provide a conversion for their children that did not involve a commitment to lead a fully Orthodox lifestyle.

The warning, by Rabbi Nahum Eisenstein, chairman of the World Council of Rabbis for Gior, appeared to cast doubts on the effectiveness of attempts to turn the proposals of the Neeman Committee into law.

An American Reform leader, heading a group of activists from the US, also denounced the attempt to make a law of the Neeman Committee's proposals, saying they were only the conversion bill under another name.

Under the new bill, the Jewish Agency would establish the institutes of Jewish studies with the help of state funding as part of its work in immigrant absorption. The staff would reflect all the different streams of Judaism and students could choose what courses to take.

The state authorities only would recognize conversions, for the purposes of the Population Registry, of new immigrants and citizens whose conversions in Israel took place through the conversion courts. As with the conversion bill being demanded by

the religious parties, conversions of all streams carried out abroad would be recognized according to this bill.

The Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee is scheduled to discuss the conversion issue today. Labor MKs who discussed the subject yesterday opposed the conversion bill being promoted by the religious parties. Although they did not reach a decision on the Neeman proposals, some, including Uzi Baram, announced their support for the bill submitted by Lubotzky, Bronfman, and Zandberg.

United Torah Judaism MKs, however, met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday and asked him to abide by the coalition agreement, which calls for the conversion bill to be passed. The four MKs said that at the end of the month Agudat Yisrael's Council of Sages is scheduled to meet and it would probably decide the party should leave the coalition if the agreement is not kept.

Meanwhile, Eisenstein said that if anything, since responsibility for conversion had come under the aegis of Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau, the criteria for conversion have become stricter, not more lenient. According to the new rules established by Lau, Eisenstein said, every special rabbinical court for conversion must send him the names of all three rabbis on the court, not just its head, as in the past, for his approval. In addition, even after the formal conversion had been carried out, every convert must obtain Lau's personal approval before receiving a conversion certificate, Eisenstein added.

Eisenstein issued his warning to the parents in an advertisement in the haredi daily, *Yated Ne'eman*, as a clarification for what he termed the unfortunate parents who were unable to have children of their own. The parents should not be misled, he said, by High Court decisions, Druckman, or others.



Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, stands beside a barrier erected to enable a group of Reform Jews could pray at the Western Wall yesterday. (U.S. Harn)

Druckman is the head of a special committee on the conversion of adopted children, set up in response to a High Court petition by parents of adopted children converted by Conservative rabbis in a ceremony at Kibbutz Hanaton in 1995. The parents asked that the Interior Ministry register their children as Jews. Of the 12 children, 10 were later reconverted in Orthodox ceremonies and Druckman has been pressing the mother of one of the remaining two to have her child undergo a similar ceremony.

However, Eisenstein said yesterday that Druckman could not promise that any child would be converted without meeting the criteria of the Chief Rabbinate, which clearly stated in a letter to him that an Orthodox lifestyle must be guaranteed.

Although they represent diametrically opposed views of Judaism, both Eisenstein and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, seemed to be in agreement that the government could not guarantee anyone an Orthodox conversion. Yoffie said that the government was trying to deceive American Jewry by talking of putting the Neeman Committee's proposals into law.

Yoffie was speaking following a brief prayer service at the Western Wall Plaza by a group of 170

UAHC rabbis and lay leaders. The group had planned to come to mark Israel's 50th anniversary, but with the renewed agitation over the conversion issue it has taken on some aspects of a mission of protest.

The sense of protest was intensified yesterday when the Reform group found itself praying at a far corner of the plaza behind several rows of parked cars and surrounded by police barriers and policemen. The spot allocated to them by the police was that where a Conservative group had prayed on Shavuot, but on the holiday there were no parked cars and the rest of the Plaza had been filled with worshippers.

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Rubin denies US distributed written proposal

By HILLEL KUTTLER

In their attempt to break the negotiating deadlock, US officials "have not — and I emphasize the word not — provided our ideas in writing to either party," State Department spokesman James

Rubin said yesterday.

He also said that Israel and the Palestinians need to de-escalate the latest tensions in Jerusalem.

Asked at his daily briefing about yesterday's clash in Silwan, Rubin said that the administration calls "on both sides to exercise maxi-

mum restraint, both in their actions and their rhetoric, especially when it comes to issues as sensitive as Jerusalem.

"Let me say that issues involving Jerusalem are the most sensitive of all the peace process issues, and we hope that this kind of dispute can be resolved peacefully."

He would not elaborate on yesterday's scheduled meeting in New York between special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross and Internal Security

Minister Avigdor Kahalani.

He also said he is less than optimistic about the prospects for reviving the talks now.

"Some have developed, I guess, what they call an 'optimism index,' and my standard optimism... is tempered by the reality of the last nine months. And so it's hard to be optimistic when so little has happened for so long," he said.

Margot Dudkevitch and Mohammed Najib add:

Israel is humiliating the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Authority by trying to impose unilateral solutions on issues slated for the final-status talks, PA Chairman Yasser Arafat charged yesterday.

Speaking to the Organization of African Unity meeting in Burkina Faso, news agencies said he claimed that Israel is responsible for the deadlock in negotiations and would bear the responsibility if the peace process collapses.

Beatles don't sing at memorial

LONDON (AP) — Paul McCartney gathered family and friends last night to remember his wife Linda, who died in April. Hundreds of mourners sang "Let it Be" at a private service in the historic church of St. Martins-in-the-Fields in tribute to Linda

McCartney, photographer, vegetarian, animal rights campaigner, musician, wife — and mom. McCartney's office said George Harrison and Ringo Starr were part of the congregation but there were no plans for the three former Beatles to sing together.

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

An evening in honor of Israel Prize and Wolf Prize laureates among Hebrew University faculty and alumni

with the participation of the prize winners and their families

will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 1998 at the Jerusalem International Convention Center

The President, Chairman, Honorary Officers, Board and Staff of the United Jewish Israel Appeal

are shocked and saddened by the passing of

ISAAK (John) NAJMANN ז"ל

We send our heartfelt condolences to Hertha, Phillip, Julia, Michele and all the family.

May they be comforted amongst the mourners of Zion.

The funeral will take place today, June 9, 1998, at 5 p.m., at the Caesarea cemetery.

A bus will leave the Hilton Hotel, Tel Aviv, at 3:15.

KEREN HAYESOD — UNITED ISRAEL APPEAL

The leaders, contributors and staff of Keren Hayesod are saddened by the passing of

JOHN NAJMANN

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Heartfelt condolences to Hertha, Herbert, Jochi and Hannah on the loss of their beloved husband and brother, our dear friend

JOHN NAJMANN ז"ל

May you and your family be comforted among the mourners of Jerusalem

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Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Jerusalem

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff are saddened by the passing of

ANDREW BALINT (London)

A man of integrity, a modest, kind and generous benefactor of the Medical Center.

Our sincere condolences to his widow Agi, children Gabriel and Kitty, grandchildren, and his brother George Balint.

חמסם ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

We sadly announce that

ESTHER SHANNON (nee Pomson)

passed away yesterday, aged 82.

The funeral will take place today, Tuesday, June 9, at 6:30 p.m., at the Segula cemetery, Petah Tikva.

Shiva at 24 Rehov Pica, Petah Tikva.

Dr. Abe Shannon Susan Weingarten and family, Petah Tikva Harry Shannon and family, Canada Elihu Shannon and family, Kibbutz Saad

YASSIN

Continued from Page 1

The same sources said that Jordan and Egypt informed the Palestinian Authority that if the Israeli authorities prevent Yassin's return to Gaza, they would not allow him to reside in their countries. The sources said Jordan justified denying Yassin entry three weeks ago by claiming the request had not come from the PA.

While PA officials are not elated over Yassin's return, they said it would be far easier to control and monitor his movements once he returns to Gaza.

Hamas leader in Gaza Dr. Mahmoud Zahar said Yassin is due to arrive in Egypt today and is expected to remain there for two days in order to rest and undergo medical tests before returning to Gaza.

MK Hagai Merom (Labor) told Israel Radio yesterday that he had met on Saturday with Gaza Palestinian Preventive Security head Mohammed Dahlan and West Bank Preventive Security head Jibril Rajoub on Saturday. Merom said the two stressed that if Israel prevents Yassin from returning to Gaza, they will be turning him into a martyr.

Liat Collins and Mohammed Najib contributed to this report.

In south Lebanon vote Amal outpolls Hizbullah

By DAVID FUDGE

Hizbullah has apparently suffered a blow to its hopes of becoming the leader of the Shi'ite community in south Lebanon, according to initial results of the municipal elections held in the region on Sunday.

Lebanese radio stations reported that the more moderate and secular Amal, contrary to expectations, had actually won slightly more municipalities than its fundamentalist rival.

According to the reports, Amal won control of 32 municipalities, including the key port of Tyre, while Hizbullah took 30, including Nabatiya.

Hizbullah fared somewhat better in the smaller villages, winning 70 percent of the votes cast for the positions of mukhtar (village leader).

The local elections are the first to be held in Lebanon in nearly 35 years and are seen by many political pundits as giving a truer reflection of grassroots feelings than the parliamentary elections in 1992 and 1996.

Hizbullah has for years been pouring funds into the south and providing social, welfare, and educational services, as well as catering to religious needs, in an effort to win the hearts and minds of Shi'ite residents. It had been expected to register massive wins in the local poll.

Amal, which in many areas exists more in name than as an organized movement, barely

managed to get its act together at all, according to Lebanese newspaper reports.

The movement, headed by Lebanese Parliament speaker Nabih Berri, did, however, put forward candidates who are well known in the areas considered to be its strongholds.

"Hizbullah apparently made a big mistake in believing that ideology would carry the day. Instead, it appears that the local electorate voted for the people they know and those they believe can deliver the goods on a practical basis," said a veteran Lebanese analyst.

One of the interesting initial results was in Kafra and nearby Yatar villages, just north of the security zone, which for years have been hotbeds of hostile activity against the IDF and the South Lebanese Army. Kafra, according to Lebanese radio reports, was won by Amal, while the vote in Yatar was split among Hizbullah, Amal, and a leftist list.

In Beirut, excluding the predominantly Christian and Shi'ite areas where local elections were held last week, a list put together by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri swept the board. There were no elections in the security zone.

Meanwhile, Lebanese newspapers reported that SLA soldiers had destroyed three homes in Huleh village in the eastern sector of the zone on Saturday night. According to reports, the homes belonged to residents suspected of collaborating with Hizbullah.

Peretz, Levy both confident of win

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz and his challenger MK Maxim Levy continued to exchange accusations at press conferences yesterday, with each expressing confidence in his victory in today's elections.

Peretz said his list, Am, which formed a coalition with Labor, the Likud, Shas, Yisrael Ba'aliya, and the Democratic Arab Party, is proof there is no politics when it comes to workers' causes, and will enable him to face any government.

"The Histadrut will stand firm and united against any government, headed by either [Binyamin] Netanyahu or [Ehud] Barak. These elections will restore the balance between capital and labor, which has been totally disrupted," Peretz said.

He rejected as "disinformation" reports that the Histadrut would not enable the rival Geshur-Meretz list get its election budget, noting the factions will have to get funding

from the Histadrut treasurer after the elections.

He denied getting campaign contributions from any tycoons or private bodies and said he even had to mortgage his house to finance his campaign. He said he contracted a Histadrut company to conduct the election campaign — posters, ballots, polling booths, etc. — because "why should an outside company make money when the Histadrut can?"

Peretz blasted the government's indifference to the plight of the unemployed and the workers, promising to fight relentlessly against unemployment, personal contracts, personnel companies, and privatization without consulting the workers. Peretz promised to allocate one-third of his list's places in the Histadrut leadership to women and said he would try to persuade his coalition partners to do the same.

Hedva Almog, Am's candidate for Na'amat chairwoman, pledged to fight for

equalizing women's pay. She denied "selling out" Na'amat's day care centers to Shas, as her rivals charge, stating: "Shas has no interest in Na'amat and we have no interest in having them."

The leaders of Geshur-Meretz's list, MKs Maxim and David Levy (Geshur), Yossi Sarid, Ran Cohen, and Anat Maor (Meretz) attacked Peretz for using Histadrut apparatus, facilities, and personnel for his election campaign and charged him with corruption.

"Peretz's campaign tactics take us back to the dark '50s. All the rules have been broken, all the norms trampled," David Levy said, noting that more than 50,000 Histadrut members do not appear on the voters' list to ensure Peretz's victory.

"Peretz joined the Likud, Shas, and Yisrael Ba'aliya, who are responsible for the unemployment and the social ills. It's a coalition without an ideology or values. How will the Histadrut fight against the government when the latter's representa-

tives are in the Histadrut executive?" he asked.

Maxim Levy said Peretz's people were threatening workers and union members if they support him. "They demanded we give them the list of our poll booth supervisors so they could intimidate them, and some have already been warned not to come to their shifts," he said.

Sarid said Meretz had no funds to issue leaflets or publish more ads, because Peretz would not give out the election budget allocated by the Histadrut to the contesting parties.

"The goings on in these elections will be reappearing for many years to come in the corridors of the police interrogation headquarters and in the courts," he predicted.

Maor, Geshur-Meretz's candidate for Na'amat chairwoman, said the process of Shas taking over Na'amat day care centers is already under way in Netanya, Or Akiva, Haifa, and Sdot Yam.

PM: It may be too late to stop Iran, Iraq nuclear plans

By LIAT COLLINS

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday repeated that Israel is doing everything to thwart Iran's attempts to arm itself with nonconventional ballistic and nuclear weapons.

Netanyahu reportedly told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the international community had largely ignored the issue until Israel had begun raising it. He said although there had been a change, it was not sufficient and it is possible that Israel will not be able to prevent Iran and Iraq from acquiring nuclear capabilities.

He said the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan had created a lack of balance in the international system.

The prime minister said there is no connection between the peace process and Iran and Iraq's nuclear programs. On the contrary, it meant Israel should strengthen its conventional capabilities and determine what areas are necessary to Israel for its security needs.

Netanyahu said the Chinese president had promised him during his recent trip to China that China would not sell nuclear technology to Iran and that some Chinese companies had even canceled contracts.



New Rothberg school building dedicated

Hebrew University President Menachem Magidor (center) and Chairman of the Board of Governors Alex Grass present Samuel Rothberg the keys to the new \$10 million building of the Rothberg International School at the dedication ceremony yesterday. The new 6,000 square-meter building, located in the center of the Mount Scopus campus, is named for the late Louis Boyar, a close friend of Rothberg, for whom the school is named. (Zoom)

HEBREW PRESS REVIEW

By ORLY AHARONI

Lebanese bloodshed

The Lebanese issue has been raised to further prominence on the public agenda, following the recent deaths of two Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon from roadside bombs last week and the protest initiated by the Four Mothers' Movement supporting the withdrawal from Lebanon.

Offer Shelah, writing in *Ma'ariv*, complains that a practical discussion is not being conducted regarding southern Lebanon. "When soldiers are killed, we claim that we cannot argue over blood; when soldiers do not get killed, we do not want to argue, because there is nothing

to argue about. Tomorrow's dead do not interest us today."

Nahum Barnea, writing in *Yedioth*, refers to signs of a Syrian wish to begin talks with Israel. He writes that the Lebanese want an Israeli withdrawal, while the Syrians are forcing them to say "no." This, he says, raises fear among the Syrians that "one day, the Lebanese will be fed up, and they will start slaughtering Syrian officers in Beirut's dark alleys."

Conversion predicament

The Knesset Law Committee will convene this week in order to discuss the conversion bill, after the failure of attempts to reach

agreement among the three streams of Judaism through the Neeman initiative.

According to Akiva Eldar, of *Ha'aretz*, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's decision to support the conversion bill near the same time as an agreement on the second redeployment, is a move that lacks any consistency or logic.

"An Israeli leader who on the eve of a conflict with the US, declares war on 80 percent of American Jews, is similar to a ruler who, on the eve of war, demands to cut the salary of his soldiers."

Conviction overturned

The Tel Aviv District Court's

overturning of the conviction of Dror Hoter-Yishai, head of the Israel Bar Association, on tax evasion charges "strengthens the trust in the independence of the judicial system that does not convict all those that the attorney-general chooses to put to trial," writes Prof. Ruth Gabizon in *Yedioth Achronot*.

Yosef Lapid writes in *Ma'ariv* that Hoter-Yishai is entitled to be satisfied with the reversal of the verdict.

However, "his wild conduct in court, his attack against the legal system and his harsh criticism against the judges... raise doubts as to his eligibility to represent the community of attorneys."

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◆ MK Prof. Alex Lubotzky

◆ Prof. Yaakov Ne'eman

◆ MK Shimon Peres

◆ Prof. Itamar Rabinovich

◆ Rabbi Uri Regev

◆ Dr. Andrew Renton

◆ Prof. Anita Shapira

◆ Prof. Chaim Shein

◆ Mr. Yehoshua Sobol

◆ Dr. Dov S. Zakheim

20.00 Opening Session:

Israel and the Diaspora

Chair - Mr. Stephen M. Greenberg (USA)

Opening remarks - MK Shimon Peres (Israel)

Mr. Charles Bronfman (North America)

Prof. Itamar Rabinovich (Israel)

Entrance to the opening session by invitation only.

10.00 First Session:

Pluralism in the Jewish World, Vision or Reality?

Chair - MK Prof. Alex Lubotzky (Israel)

Opening Remarks - Prof. Yaakov Ne'eman (Israel)

Panel - Rabbi Dr. Abraham Levy (UK)

Prof. Chaim Shein (Israel)

Rabbi Uri Regev (Israel)

MK Prof. Naomi Chazan (Israel)

14.30 Second Session:

Individual and Collective Identity in the Jewish World

Chair - Mr. Eli Amir (Israel)

Panel - Prof. Anita Shapira (Israel)

Dr. Dov S. Zakheim (USA)

Dr. Andrew Renton (UK)

Mr. Yehoshua Sobol (Israel)

16.30 Closing Session:

Chair - Mr. Avraham Burg (Israel)

Lt. General Amnon Lipkin-Shahak

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Programme Highlights

Tuesday, June 9:

Wednesday, June 10:

Thursday, June 11:

Friday, June 12:

Shabbat, June 13:

Sunday, June 14:

Monday, June 15:

Tuesday, June 16:

Wednesday, June 17:

Opening dinner in Tel Aviv and briefing on "The Ha'apala: Human and Political Drama" by Dr. Aviva Halamish, Tel Aviv University.

Flight to Cyprus to mark the era of Ha'apala, detention in camps by the British authorities of 52,384 "illegal immigrants", 1946-1949.

Dinner with Guest of Honour, President of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Glafcos Clerides. Lecture by Prof. Shlomo Avineri of Hebrew University, "Ha'apala: Fight for Self-Determination and Sovereignty".

Visit Dhekelia, site of former Ma'apilim camp; Panel moderated by Dr. Irit Keinan with eyewitness accounts by those who were Ma'apilim: Yacov Gilead, Prof. Emanuel Gutmann, Nehama Gutmann, Shmuel Yanay.

Ceremony at Larnaka Harbour and unveiling of first plaque in Cyprus to mark the historic era of the camps. Tribute to Mr. P. Papavassiliou, devoted friend of Israel and moving spirit behind Cypriot help to the Ma'apilim.

Overnight sailing to Haifa.

"Sheheyanu" blessing on deck in view of the Israel shore

Welcome at port by Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna

"Closing the circle": Tour of Adit Ma'apilim site.

Check into Dan Carmel Hotel, Haifa.

Address by Rabbi She'ar-Yashuv Cohen, Chief Rabbi of Haifa.

Shabbat: Eve dinner and Oneg Shabbat.

Shabbat morning service.

Group discussions by language: "Reflections on Common Jewish Values" (Spanish); "Women in Israel Society" (English).

Evening home hospitality by Israel's Druze community.

Visit to the Israel Aircraft Industry.

Wreath-laying ceremony at IDF Armoured Corps Memorial Site in Latrun.

Check into Jerusalem Hyatt Hotel.

Dinner and presentation of Keren Hayesod Awards: International Women's Division Leadership to Mrs. Nicole Weinberg of France, and the S.J. Kreutner Prizes for Professional Excellence.

Panel on "Israel: Prospects and Perspectives", with Prof. Yeheskel Dror, Prof. Haim Barkai and Mr. Charles R. Bronfman.

Award ceremony at the Knesset, with Speaker M.K. Dan Tichon, of the Israel Goldstein Prize for Distinguished Leadership to Mr. Ignatz Bubis, President of the Central Board of the Jews in Germany.

Panel on "Unity or Polarization", with Dr. Mordechai Bar-On, Dr. Yael Tamir and Rabbi Michael Melchior.

Address by newly elected World Chairman of Keren Hayesod, Ambassador Avi Pazner: "Keren Hayesod in the Next Decade"

Comments by Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Daniel Liverant, and Director General, Dr. Baruch Gur.

Meeting of the Keren Hayesod Women's Division.

Presentation ceremony of the Yakir Keren Hayesod Prizes, in honour of Israel's 50th anniversary, to leaders from around the world, with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Presentation of the Yakir Prize to former Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Shamir.

Meeting of the Keren Hayesod Campaign Cabinet.

Security brass said to favor Yassin return

By LIAT COLLINS

The issue of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin's return to Gaza is "of utmost sensitivity and is being discussed in closed security forums. I will conclude the discussions and take a decision," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday.

He was speaking to reporters after a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Inside the committee, he reportedly said the security establishment is inclined towards allowing the Hamas founder to return to Gaza as he would be a lesser risk to Israel here than if he remains outside of it.

Committee chairman Uzi Landau (Likud), however, said he is against Yassin's return. Labor leader Ehud Barak said the biggest mistake was that Yassin was released from prison without being required to make a public commitment to refrain from terror. Netanyahu stressed to reporters that Yassin was released as part of an effort to stabilize Israel's relations with Jordan, which he said are of utmost importance to Israel. He said the release also followed repeated warnings by the security establishment "of the possible catastrophic consequences" were Yassin to die in prison.

"In my opinion, stabilizing the relationship with Jordan which was in a dangerous condition fol-

lowing the Mash'al Affair] was a vital interest and the risk of Yassin dying in prison was, from our point of view, a high one in any constellation," Netanyahu said.

Regarding the diplomatic process, Netanyahu said there had been some progress in the negotiations in recent weeks but could not give a date for an agreement. He said any agreement would be much better than could have been reached two years ago or even two months ago.

Asked about convening the Palestinian National Council so it can rescind the covenant, Netanyahu said: "It's part of the Palestinian commitments. I can't imagine that we are talking about

peace without the PNC canceling the call for Israel's destruction."

Barak told reporters there are three ticking timebombs: Yassin and the nuclear programs of Iran and Iraq. He also accused Netanyahu of causing a deterioration in the relations with the US.

"The situation is three-times too big for the government," Barak said.

In response, Netanyahu said: "The necessary solutions for Israel are several sizes too big for the Labor Party. We are acting first of all realistically, recognizing reality and not from wishful thinking or false illusions. We are acting to ensure Israel's security and necessary space for its security."

Barak said, "The necessary solutions for Israel are several sizes too big for the Labor Party. We are acting first of all realistically, recognizing reality and not from wishful thinking or false illusions. We are acting to ensure Israel's security and necessary space for its security."

The sheikh's choice words

By HERB KEINON

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin left Gaza some three months ago for "medical treatment" in Saudi Arabia. He traveled to Saudi Arabia, as well as Egypt, Qatar, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Yemen, Syria, and Sudan.

In the process he has been received like royalty in some quarters, and reportedly raised some \$300 million for Hamas. During his travels, Yassin has had some choice words to say about Israel. Among his declarations: "The

first quarter of the next century will witness the elimination of the Zionist entity and the establishment of the Palestinian state over the whole of Palestine," he said in Damascus. Hamas, he added, will continue its fight against Israel "until the liberation of all Palestine."

In another speech in Damascus, Hussein said an IDF troop withdrawal is "of no value and the struggle will continue until occupation ends. We will not stop suicide operations, because Israeli withdrawals will not amount to a solution to our cause."

Between a rock and a hard place

IN CONTEXT

As Sheikh Ahmed Yassin makes his way back to Gaza from his Mideast tour of hate and venom, he is placing the government in an unenviable dilemma.

Let the sheikh in, and the country allows within its borders a man who as recently as two weeks ago has vowed to destroy it, and who has raised millions of dollars over the last few weeks to further those aims.

Keep Yassin out, and the country is inviting immediate terror and increasing the possibility that he will join up with even more extreme elements.

If the government lets Yassin in, it may unwittingly weaken the position of the Palestinian Authority on the Palestinian street. But if the government keeps Yassin out, it will only add to his stature.

Talk about being stuck between a rock and a hard place.

In tallying the pros and cons of allowing Yassin back into Gaza, it is necessary to pay attention to some dynamics not apparent at first blush.

One of those, said Ariel Merari, head of Tel Aviv University's Political Violence Research Unit, is the current tension between Hamas leadership in Gaza and the organization's leadership abroad.

Compared with Hamas leaders abroad, those in Gaza are more "moderate and pragmatic," Merari said. This follows a pattern true of insurgency organizations the world over, where leaders abroad have the luxury of being more dogmatic and "pure," while the local leaders must take into consideration real-life constraints and may be more willing to compromise.

Hamas leadership in Gaza, Merari said, has

up to now been dependent financially on Hamas abroad. Yassin's fund-raising mission needs to be seen in part as an attempt to free the organization from the dependence on foreign funds, something that in the long run could actually have a moderating effect on the organization.

The question of whether to carry out terror attacks is a political decision, Merari said. "Why is Hamas not carrying out attacks now? Because, under the influence of the organization's local leadership, Hamas is taking into consideration the PA's policy, which is to make it to May 1999 [when PA leader Yasser Arafat said he will declare a Palestinian state] without terrorist attacks that could shatter intentional support for statehood."

The money Yassin has raised, Merari said, will bolster the internal leadership of the organization, which is more moderate than Hamas abroad. Strengthening that wing, he said, is in Israel's interest.

Tel Aviv University Prof. Shaul Mishal, author of a book on Hamas scheduled for release in two months, said that Yassin inside Gaza will be important for Arafat when he tries to win acceptance of further IDF withdrawals.

Furthermore, according to Mishal, "Israel has to let him enter, because he represents people we will need to talk to in the future. In the final analysis, Israel is going to have to

talk in one form or another with elements inside Hamas."

Mishal recommended not focusing on Yassin's extreme statements made during the current tour but more moderate statements he has made about a possible dialogue with Israel in the past.

"I believe that under certain circumstances the PA needs Yassin here, because in the power struggle that will ensue among the Palestinians if and when there will be an arrangement, Yassin will be more comfortable for the PA than some other people [inside Hamas]," he said.

But Brig.-Gen. (res) Yigal Pressler, who worked as a counter-terrorism expert under four prime ministers, argued that Hamas is bad for Arafat and the PA, since it is in direct competition with the PA.

"I don't know why Israel let him go abroad in the first place," Pressler said. "But once he left he collected funds, and I have no doubt that those funds are not for charity, but to organize the Hamas better to attack us."

Pressler said a better funded and organized Hamas also endangers Arafat, since it will provide more formidable competition in the battle for Palestinian public opinion.

Pressler, in the final analysis, said he is opposed to allowing Yassin in on principle. "From my point of view he is a terrorist," that's all," Pressler said. "If he says he wants to come back and join up with Arafat, be his partner, come to an agreement with us, then that is a different story, and I will shake his hand. But that is not the case. He is collecting money for attacks, and he has not showed any intention of changing his ways. You just don't let terrorists enter."

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2 more no-confidence motions pass to no avail

By LIAT COLLINS

The Knesset yesterday passed two more no-confidence motions in the prime minister filed by the opposition parties, but as predicted they did not gather the necessary support of 61 MKs to bring the government down.

The motions were over the diplomatic process and growing unemployment. The result of the first vote was 38-10, with one abstention and in the second 38-9 with one abstention.

Coalition whip Meir Sheetrit called on his MKs to boycott the vote to protest the opposition's policy of raising a new no-confidence motion every week, but Tsomet MKs turned up for the vote, even canceling a meeting with the prime minister for it.

As happened last week, some of the coalition MKs who stayed away did so for different reasons.

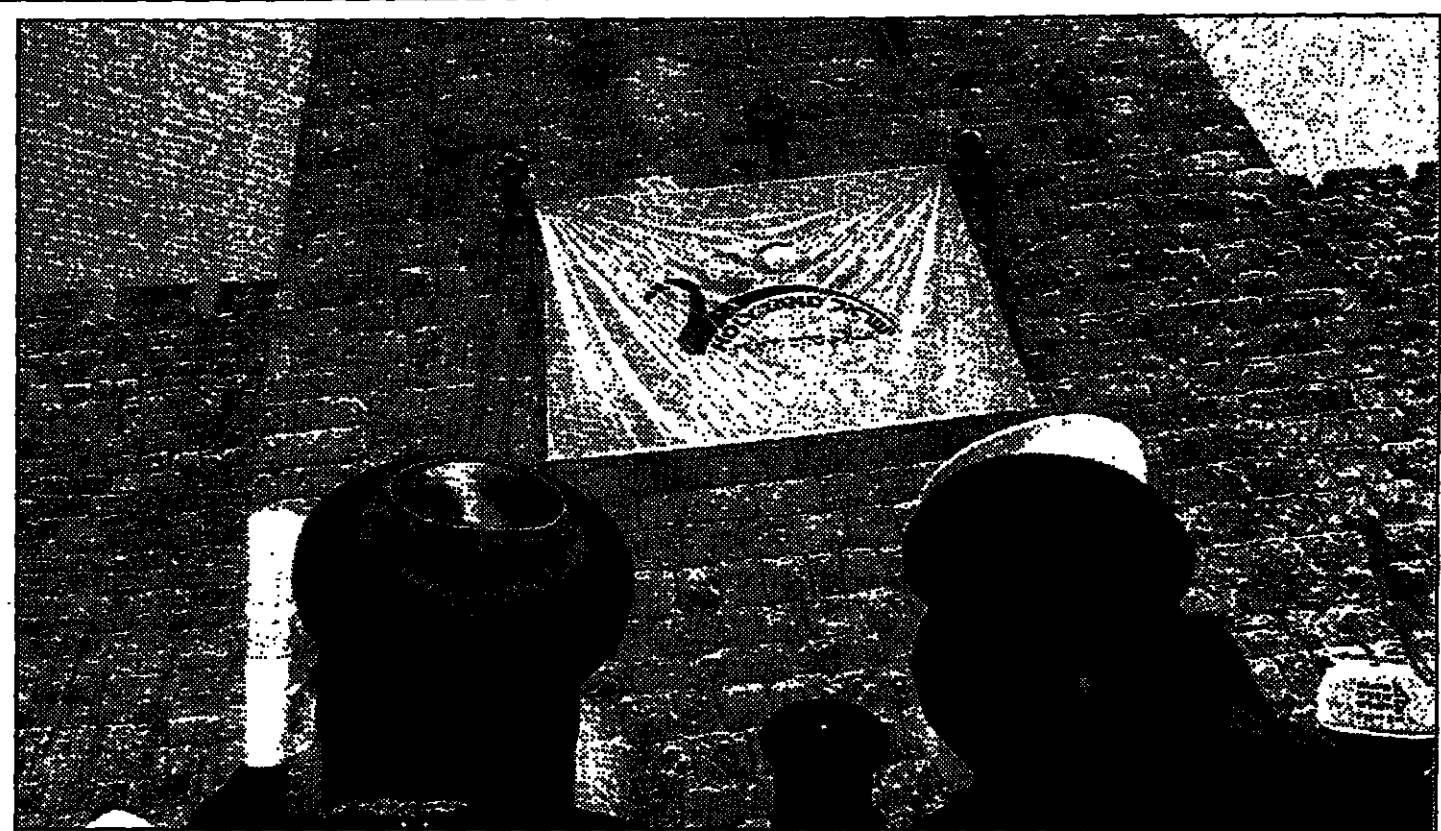
Third Way MKs boycotted to protest the lack of progress in the peace process, while four National Religious Party MKs stayed away to protest the lack of progress in the planned construction of housing at Har Homa. Transport Minister Shaul Yahalom (NRP) was present and voted against the motions.

Labor whip Elie Goldschmidt said the voting pattern showed that the coalition is completely undisciplined and falling apart. He has collected the signatures of 40 MKs necessary to demand the prime minister appear in the Knesset plenum for a debate on the negotiations with the Palestinians within 21 days.

"The request was submitted following the way Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is utterly ignoring the legislative body and that he has not even once responded to the no-confidence motions filed against him by the opposition," Goldschmidt said.

At a Meretz faction meeting, Dedi Zucker and Ran Cohen said the party should file fewer no-confidence motions and concentrate on the quality of the motions instead of the quantity to prevent it being eroded as a parliamentary tool.

It was decided to raise the matter at the next gathering of the opposition parties.



Gearing up for the millennium

The logo for the year 2000 observance is hung on the walls of Jerusalem's Old City yesterday. Tourism officials said they expect up to four million Christian pilgrims during the millennium year.

(Brian Hendler)

World Cup bumps 'News in English'

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Channel 1's daily *News in English* will be canceled or moved to different time slots for the next three weeks due to the World Cup broadcasts. Today, it will be on at its normal 6:15 p.m., but tomorrow and Thursday it will be broadcast at 5:35. See Friday's *Time Out* for next week's schedule.

Mabar will be moved to 9 p.m. "Management said the World Cup is top priority and they're canceling and moving lots of programs aside. They consider it a

great coup which will win Channel 1 great ratings," one worker said.

ITV news director Yair Stern confirmed the report but said other programs have been canceled and cut to make way for the World Cup. "The *News in English* viewing percentage is only 2 percent-3%,

that's about 100,000 viewers. It's mainly for new immigrants from English-speaking countries and *Jerusalem Post* readers. I'd be very pleased if all these immigrants would learn Hebrew and start watching *Mabar*, they'd get much more information," Stern said.

Ya'alon accuses Ra'anah Cohen of leaking report

The outgoing head of Military Intelligence, Major-General Moshe Ya'alon, has written a letter to the chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Uzi Landau, complaining that incorrect information had been leaked to the press from a closed meeting last month.

The letter mentioned Labor Party Secretary-General Ra'anah Cohen as the source of the leak. Ya'alon said that if closed meetings did not remain confidential the ability of the head of intelligence to give a full report would be affected.

"This type of leak serves foreign interests, harms the credibility of the OC Military Intelligence and sometimes even state security," Ya'alon wrote.

In response, Cohen said, "The

words of the OC Military Intelligence are not the words of God. It is my duty and right as a public official to question them. I see myself as responsible for state security and in the light of Ya'alon's behavior I am even more worried."

Youths for Pollard

Distributing stickers with the slogan "My brother, Jonathan Pollard," members of different youth groups attended a meeting of the Knesset caucus for Pollard yesterday. The teenagers represented groups ranging from Hano'ar Ha'oved Vebalomed, Beitar, Bnei Akiva, Ezra and the

Agricultural Union. The representatives told the committee their members are signing a petition to be sent to US President Bill Clinton calling for Pollard's release. They are also planning a mass demonstration outside the US Embassy in September.

Tariff warns about policy to Arab sector

In a meeting of the Knesset Interior Committee yesterday on the Arab sector, committee chairman Sallah Tarif said: "The government's policy towards Arabs is worrying and could create an uprising."

He complained particularly

about the demolition of homes of Beduin in unrecognized villages.

Beilin's safety net

MK Yossi Beilin (Labor) has gathered 11 signatures of party colleagues calling for a discussion in the faction on providing the government with a safety net on a vote on the further redeployment.

This goes against the inclination of Labor leader Ehud Barak, who said there is no need to decide on a safety net until the issue comes to the vote.

Beilin said, "The implementation of the further redeployment is a vital interest to Israel and Labor cannot provide the prime minister with an excuse for not carrying it out."

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Hoter-Yishai to file complaints

A.G. Rubinstein slams Bar chairman's statements

By DAN IZENBERG

Bar Association chairman Dror Hoter-Yishai said yesterday he intends to lodge complaints with the police against everyone involved in drafting the tax evasion indictment against him - including former attorney-general Michael Ben-Yair, State Attorney Edna Arbel, Yehoshua Resnik, head of the state attorney's criminal section, Jerusalem District Attorney Moshe Lador, and several other officials in the State Attorney's Office.

Hoter-Yishai also said that Tel Aviv District Court Judge Michal

Rubinstein ought to have disqualified herself from hearing his appeal because she is a close friend of Arbel's. Rubinstein wrote in a minority opinion that part of Hoter-Yishai's conviction should have been upheld.

Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein said Hoter-Yishai's attacks on the judges and lawyers are "dangerous and irresponsible, precisely because of the distinguished position he holds in the Bar Association."

Hoter-Yishai reiterated his claims that the charges against him had been baseless. "Even the

tax authorities thought as I did and did not take into account the income [from the plot of land his father and other partners owned.] Therefore, I wrote to the state attorney and all the other lawyers who participated in the drafting of the indictment that 'immediately after the end of the legal process, I would file a complaint against them, charging them with the offense defined in the penal code as 'abuse of power.'"

He added that Michal Rubinstein had been appointed to the panel of judges hearing his appeal at the last moment, after

the previous judge had disqualified himself because his son went to the same school as Hoter-Yishai's daughter.

"Last night, I found out that the judge appointed to replace him is a very close friend of the state attorney," he said. "It seems to me that under the circumstances, she should have disqualified herself."

Elyakim Rubinstein said that if Hoter-Yishai thought Judge Rubinstein should not sit on the panel, he could have asked the court to disqualify her, in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Hoter-Yishai's onslaughts on the lawyers and other senior officials in the State Attorney's Office are a course attempt to prevent them from fulfilling their public tasks to the best of their professional ability," Rubinstein said in a written statement.

"In the final analysis, the question is where is Hoter-Yishai heading? Has he thought about their inevitable results - the fact that they sow confusion among the public regarding the rule of law and the foundations of the justice system which have been built with so much hard work."

Law C'tee preparing court reform bill

By DAN IZENBERG

The Knesset Law Committee yesterday began to prepare a bill to establish administrative courts, which will eventually handle most of the petitions currently handled by the High Court of Justice, for final approval.

The administrative courts will be part of the existing district courts.

The redistribution of functions is part of a sweeping reform of the court system, whereby many of the current responsibilities of the Supreme Court will be given to the district courts and those of the district courts to the magistrate's courts.

Committee chairman Hanan Porat (National Religious Party) and MK Benny Elon (Molodet) were the only two committee members present at the meeting, which was also attended by Supreme Court Justice Yitzhak Zamir, District Court Judges Dan Arbel and Ezra Kama, and Bar Association head Dror Hoter-Yishai.

Zamir told the committee that no other supreme court has to serve as a first instance for as many cases as Israel's. According to the bill, the court would be able to transfer many of the petitions which it now hears to the administrative courts with the consent of the minister of justice and the permission of the Knesset Law Committee.

Elon said the new legislation gives too much power to the Supreme Court president. He said he wants the law to specify precisely which topics would be transferred to the administrative courts, instead of leaving them by default under the aegis of the Supreme Court.

He also strongly opposed the provision whereby the president of the Supreme Court determines which district court judges would serve on the administrative court.

"I take a grave view of the fact that the president of the Supreme Court is involved in the appointments," said Elon. "He has too much power. He will examine each of the candidates and then select those who think exactly like him. I am particularly concerned because we have a smart and dominant Supreme Court president. I regard this arrangement as a threat to democracy."

Zamir explained that in the first stage, the Supreme Court would transfer 150 out of the 1,750 annual High Court petitions to the administrative courts and see how it works, before handing over more responsibility. Hoter-Yishai supported the legislation, but said it should specify exactly when the bulk of the cases would be transferred to the administrative courts.

Court charges Dana International with assault

Eurovision contest winner Dana International was charged with assault yesterday during a brief appearance in the Rehovot Magistrate's Court.

Prosecutors allege that during a November 1995 performance in Rishon LeZion, International pushed a waitress.

Later, she threw a bottle of mineral water that struck a spectator in the neck and caused bruising and sensitivity in parts of the spinal chord, according to the charge sheet.

Shmuel Tsang, International's lawyer, said she was pleading not guilty to the charges.

"Such an indictment needs to be reexamined," Tsang told Army Radio.

International had previously been summoned to court three times to be charged, but failed to show up. She appeared yesterday only after Judge Ilana Gat issued a subpoena.

After a three-minute proceeding, Gat set January 26 as the date for the trial to start.

International entered the courtroom wearing dark sunglasses. She was accompanied by two friends and adamantly refused to answer questions by journalists.

Last month, after winning the Eurovision contest, the transsexual International was warmly congratulated by Tourism Minister Moshe Katsav and other officials. She was also the subject of a surge of support and media attention among homosexuals and lesbians. But hardi leaders condemned her.

(News agencies)



Dana International leaves court yesterday after her hearing.

(Yael Somekh/Israel Sun)

Immigrants not forced to take nursing exam in Hebrew

By JUDY SIEGEL

The Health Ministry has rolled back a unilateral decision taken two months ago to force immigrant nurses to take their licensing exam only in Hebrew.

The original decision raised an outcry among some of the 550 immigrant nurses who sit for the licensing exam each year and triggered action by Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein, who sent a protest to Health Minister Yehoshua Matza.

Not only will English-language licensing exams be restored, but the ministry is likely to translate the tests into other native languages of nurses, just as separate government-sponsored committees do for immigrant physicians and pharmacists.

The original decision was taken by Health Ministry Director-General Gabi Barabash, upon recommendation from its nursing authority, which argued that "tests in English were never legal but only a holdover from the British

Mandate." A joint committee of the Health and Absorption ministries has been set up to formulate the guidelines for the Hebrew-language exams, and then for English-language tests of professional material related to nursing.

A decision will then be taken about any other languages into which to translate the exams. Because of the added bureaucratic work translations and marking by qualified speakers of the other languages will entail, the ministry may decide to make the licensing exams less frequent.

Barabash told *The Jerusalem Post* that his original intention was to ensure that nurses, who are in direct and constant contact with their patients, are able to converse and write competently in Hebrew.

But he conceded that this could be determined by first giving them a Hebrew-language competency test before they take their licensing exam in their native tongue if they wish.

All Paltel phone numbers to change

By JUDY SIEGEL

During the next three months, all phone numbers of subscribers to Paltel (the Palestinian Authority's phone company) will be changed to seven digits, Bezeq announced yesterday after being informed by the Communications Ministry.

Phones in the Judea and Binyamin regions (from Ramallah to Hebron) begin (02)2xxxxxx; in northern Samaria (06)24xxxxxx; (06)25xxxxxx or (06)28xxxxxx; in the Gaza district (07)2xxxxxx; and in central Samaria (09)2xxxxxx.

Phone rates for Bezeq subscribers to phones in areas controlled by the PA will not change.

The new numbering system allows Paltel to change the phone numbers of its subscribers to a uniform seven digits and expand existing switching systems, with an adequate reserve of unused numbers.

Paltel's 06 dialling area will change the numbers today; the 09 area will switch over on June 23, followed by July 7 for the 07 area and August 4 for the 02 area.

NEWS

in brief

Teachers to strike high schools tomorrow

Teachers at all the nation's secondary schools will strike tomorrow to protest the cut of thousands of class hours in secondary schools in development towns, confrontation line settlements, and disadvantaged neighborhoods. The teachers said that more than 16,500 hours have recently been cut following a government decision to end enrichment programs. *litm*

Schools told to cut back on graduation events

Education Ministry Director-General Benzion Dell has called on schools to mark the end of the school year with modest events that will not stretch budgets. Schools can not hire actors, impresarios, and other professionals to organize end-of-year events, the Education Ministry announced yesterday. Instead of renting out halls, schools should use their own facilities or those of the local authority, the ministry instructed. In addition, graduation ceremonies should only be held when students finish a stage of their education, such as elementary school, and not at the end of each school year, the ministry said. *litm*

President of Haifa University reelected

Haifa University's board of governors has unanimously reelected Prof. Yehuda Hayuth to serve a second four-year term as the university's president. The decision was taken during the 26th board of governors meeting, which is taking place at the university's Mt. Carmel campus. *David Rudge*

Seeger sings at jubilee concert despite protests

Pete Seeger performed Sunday at a Central Park concert celebrating Israel's jubilee, despite complaints from the Zionist Organization of America about an ad the folksinger signed 16 years ago. Seeger, who wrote "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" and "We Shall Overcome," should have been barred because he has supported the PLO and, in 1982, he signed a newspaper ad charging Israel with "state terrorism" and urging the withdrawal of the Nobel Peace Prize from prime minister Menachem Begin, the ZOA said. The spokesman at the Israeli Consulate in New York, Yehuda Ya'acov, told the *New York Post* that Seeger should not be condemned. "Israel is an open, democratic, and progressive society and appreciates an artist on his own merits," he said. "Pete Seeger has proven that overall he's a friend of Israel." Seeger sang one song - in Hebrew, Arabic and English - before a crowd of about 5,000 people. *Marilyn Henry*

Mks approve change in rules for new drivers

All new drivers must be accompanied for two months after passing their driving test, according to new regulations approved yesterday by the Knesset Economics Committee. Those passing the test at age 17 will have to be accompanied for six months by a qualified driver. At the same time, the committee agreed that students can learn to drive at age 16 and a half rather than from 17, the existing minimum age. *David Harris*

Cellcom, Barak sign deal

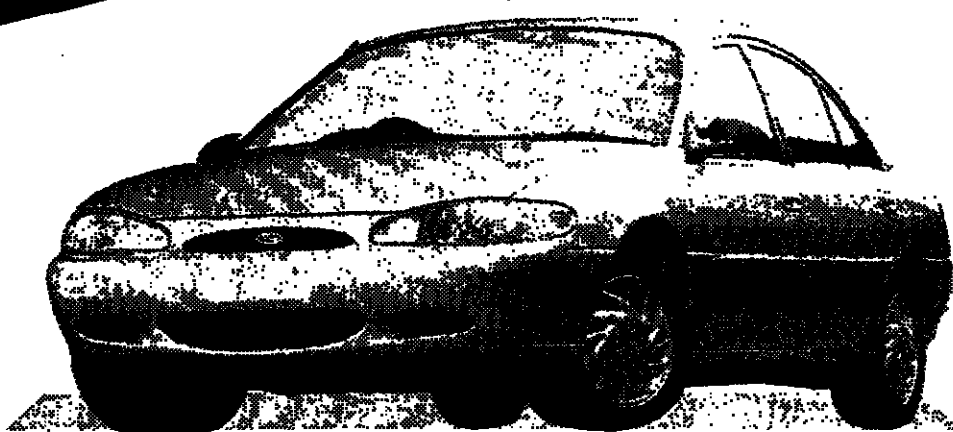
Cellcom and Barak this week signed an agreement allowing the cellular phone company's 930,000 subscribers to dial abroad by using Barak's 013 prefix. This was announced by Cellcom CEO Ya'acov Perry and Barak director-general Avi Patir yesterday. Barak is now connected to both cellular phone companies (Cellcom and Pelephone) and Cellcom is connected to all three overseas dialling companies (Barak, Golden Lines and Bezeq International). *Judy Siegel*

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ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION CENTRAL REGION

Lease Offered on Plots for the Construction of Two Homes in Ganei Tikva Tender No. Mem Resh 71/98

The Israel Lands Administration invites bids from those interested in signing a 3-year development agreement, after which those concerned will sign a 49-year lease with an option to extend for another 49 years, for land, the details of which are as follows:

Block no.	Parcel no.	Plot no.	Area (approx.)	Building area	No. of homes	Deposit
6720	192	6	422 sq.m.	403 sq.m.	2	NIS 50,000

According to building plan MemResh 5007, the plot is intended for a B-type residential area, on which two homes with an adjoining wall may be built. Total area licensed: 30% on each floor, a total of 80% on both floors + 25 sq.m. on the ground floor as part of the main building for a storehouse, garage and laundry room.

If a 15 sq.m. pergola is constructed over the parking space, the size of the auxiliary area will be 10 sq.m., plus a 50 sq.m. basement. The check which is presently on the plot must be cleared at the winning bidder's expense.

The plot is presently registered as an apartment block. The winning bidder must amend the registration at the Lands Registration Bureau. In addition, the successful bidder will be required to pay development costs according to fees and surcharges to the local authority according to the municipal by-laws.

The Israel Lands Administration reserves the right to accept any bid or to reject all bids including the highest. Tender booklets are available from June 25, 1998, at the offices of the Israel Lands Administration, 98 Danach Petach Tikva, Tel Aviv (Tel. 03-683-6388). During regular working hours, on submission of a receipt from the Post Bank for NIS 250 per booklet (includes VPI, cash only), for payment into Israel Lands Administration account 0-94180-0.

A bank check or bank guarantee for the amount stated in the table above should be attached to each bid as a deposit. The last date for submitting bids is September 3, 1998 at 12 noon. A bid not bound in the tenders box when it is opened, whatever the reason, cannot be considered. This announcement is for the purpose of general knowledge only. It does not obligate the Israel Lands Administration in any way, either in terms of contents or dates. The bidding terms are those contained in the tender documents and their appendices.

יש להגיש את הצעותיכם לרכישת אדמה לרשות המנהלית

EU bans investments in Serbia

By DOUGLAS HAMILTON

LUXEMBOURG (Reuters) — European Union foreign ministers yesterday banned new investments in Serbia to demonstrate to Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic that the EU will not tolerate the use of military force in Kosovo.

The council has today adopted a common position for a ban on new investments in Serbia, the EU ministers said in the statement issued during regular consultations in Luxembourg, dominated by the Kosovo crisis.

The statement said the EU remained ready to press ahead with other measures against Belgrade if the authorities failed to halt the excessive use of force in the Serbian province.

Some 250 people have been killed since February in clashes between Serbian forces and independence-seeking ethnic Albanians, who make up 90 percent of the two million population of Kosovo.

There is international concern that the violence could spread to neighboring Albania and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

Diplomats taken on tour of western Kosovo reported evidence of heavy fighting between Serbian police, who have heavy weapons, and Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) gunmen.

They saw houses destroyed by infantry fire or gutted by mortar explosions but no evidence of heavy artillery having been used, one diplomat said.

"There was a lot of evidence the KLA were well prepared for the fight. We saw trenches and communications between various buildings. Holes were dug into walls and cellars to enable the KLA to move about houses without being seen."

The EU ministers were calling on NATO to accelerate evaluation of military options to stop what anti-Milosevic demonstrators outside the Luxembourg conference center claimed was "genocide that has already begun."

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook told reporters that "the modern Europe will not tolerate the full might of an army being used against civilian centers."

EU ministers said Milosevic had

strained the patience of the 15-member bloc, proving, as German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel put it, that he would only respond to "harsher measures."

"I think that it is even more important that the NATO defense ministers accelerate their work, come to speedy conclusions and show themselves prepared... either to intervene or send military forces to Albania and Macedonia," European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Hans van den Broek said.

In Brussels, NATO sources said alarm bells began ringing at the alliance last week as the violence in Kosovo intensified, sending thousands of Albanian-speaking refugees fleeing into Albania.

"The planners are getting the work done as quickly as possible," a NATO official said. "We have several teams in Albania. We are pressing on and speeding up examination of the options ahead of the defense ministers' meeting later this week."

Greece, a member of the EU and NATO but also an Orthodox Christian country and friend of Serbia, said Milosevic had effectively wrecked autonomy talks with moderate ethnic Albanian leaders after only two initial meetings.

"We feel that there should have been on behalf of Milosevic a much more conservative stand, so that the talks could continue," Alternate Foreign Minister George Papandreu said.

"Obviously the measures that he took have created a very difficult situation," adding, however that "we also see an upsurge in the fighting of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army, the terrorist activities. Those two elements combined have created a very volatile situation."

An investment ban agreed by the EU and the Contact Group of major powers last month was shelved after Milosevic agreed to meet Kosovo Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova to open talks.

But the meetings were suspended last Thursday after the Yugoslav army launched a fresh assault on "separatist" villages.

The investment ban is now set to be put into force. EU sources said it could be in full force in a couple of weeks.



Czech planes collide

The rear part of a jet fighter lies near an apartment complex after two Czech Air Force MiG-21 planes collided over Ceske Budejovice yesterday. All three pilots ejected safely and six people were slightly injured. A number of parked cars in the area were hit and three buildings were set on fire as a result of the collision.

Nigeria's strongman Abacha dies of heart attack

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria's military strongman Gen. Sani Abacha has died after suffering a heart attack, close friends of Abacha's family said yesterday.

In keeping with Moslem practice, a funeral will be within the next 24 hours, said relatives who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The government has no official confirmation

of Abacha's death, but government leaders had convened an emergency meeting in Abuja, the capital.

Senior military junta officials chartered an airplane to take them from the southern hub city of Lagos to the capital, Abuja, in preparation for the funeral, the family said.

Abacha, 54, seized power in Nigeria in 1993 after canceling presidential elections and suspending the constitution.

Although the army and police usually maintain a high profile on the streets of Nigeria, the extraordinary move of sealing the head of state's residence triggered rumors in Abuja.

Abacha, who was supposed to have been at a function in Lagos last week, did not appear. He has made few public appearances since he greeted Pope John Paul II in March.

Ethiopia war mars OAU summit

By NICHOLAS PHYTHIAN

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (Reuters) — African leaders began their annual summit here yesterday with the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea overshadowing the meeting and South African President Nelson Mandela in their midst to bid them farewell.

Mandela, who is taking his leave of world leaders ahead of his retirement next year, arrived earlier in the day for a flying visit to the three-day Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit.

Over two dozen heads of state turned out for the summit, but the presidents of Ethiopia and Eritrea and of Guinea Bissau, which was rocked by an army revolt on Sunday, were absent.

Host president and new OAU chairman, Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, called for dialogue between the estranged Horn of Africa neighbors.

"How can we not appeal to the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea to let the voice of dialogue take the place of the voice of arms?" he asked his fellow heads of state in a brief speech of welcome.

Outgoing chairman President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe formally declared the summit open.

The leaders of the 54-member grouping will discuss conflict prevention, with the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia uppermost in everyone's minds, and economic integration.

The foreign ministers, who met from Thursday to Sunday, called for a cessation of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea and threw their weight behind a US and Rwandan peace plan. They urged the summit to discuss the dispute.

Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, who is enjoying a diplomatic comeback, particularly in Africa, kept everyone guessing as to whether he would attend his first OAU summit in two decades.

Gaddafi, who has given Burkina Faso more than \$3 million to help

with the cost of hosting the summit, has sent envoys to both Eritrea and Ethiopia.

OAU sources say the mercurial Libyan leader has not attended an OAU summit since 1977.

Gaddafi enjoys considerable support from fellow African leaders in his standoff with Britain and the US over the 1988 Lockerbie airliner bombing which killed 270 people.

Foreign ministers have suggested that the OAU leaders press for an immediate lifting of UN sanctions imposed on Libya to force it to hand over two suspects for trial in connection with the bombing.

OAU officials say that Libya has shown flexibility over the issue which has not been reciprocated.

In March, Mandela told visiting US President Bill Clinton in South Africa that he would not forget friends and brothers such as Gaddafi, who had helped during the darkest hour of the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa.

Gaddafi has in the past flown to Niger and Nigeria in defiance of an air embargo, which forms part of the sanctions.

The presidents in Burkina Faso included Congo Republic's Denis Sassou Nguesso, attending his first OAU summit since returning to power last October with the help of Angola after a bloody four-month showdown with elected president Pascal Lissouba. Sassou was Congo's former Marxist military leader.

Other leaders included the presidents of Algeria, the Comores, Central African Republic, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia.

The leaders were also due to discuss progress toward economic integration in line with the OAU's 1991 treaty on establishing an African economic community by 2025.

Officials said the leaders would focus specifically on transport, communications, information, and new technologies.

French arrest 9 more Islamic activists

PARIS (AP) — French authorities arrested nine more suspects yesterday in a Europe-wide effort to thwart a possible terrorist attack during the World Cup. They also urged the public to watch out for bombs.

The suspects were considered close to aides of Hassan Hattab, a leader of the Armed Islamic Group in Algeria, who allegedly ordered an attack during the games that begin tomorrow, authorities said.

The contacts between the suspects and the Algerian militants "led us to believe that they could take action," said Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement.

The ministry pointed out that the new arrests came "on the eve of the opening ceremony of World Cup soccer," being played in 10 cities across France.

"We have to be vigilant without losing their sang-froid," Chevènement told reporters. "If you see something suspect, first get away, then call 17 (the emergency police number)."

Seven of the suspects were arrested in the Paris area, while two other people were apprehended in the southern city of Carpentras and the northern city of Roubaix, police said.

The suspects were linked to two Hattab aides arrested in Germany on May 26 in sweeps that have rounded up about 100 suspects in France, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland, as well as Germany.

The aides arrested were Omar Saiki, 29, in Cologne, and Abdel Mechat, in Meckenheim. Mechat faces an international arrest warrant filed by French anti-terrorist Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere.

Known by its French initials GIA, the Armed Islamic Group is the most violent movement in a six-year-old Moslem militant insurgency in Algeria that has left more than 75,000 people dead.

Algerian militants have staged terrorist attacks in France to pressure Paris to cut its ties with the military-backed government of the petroleum-rich North African nation.

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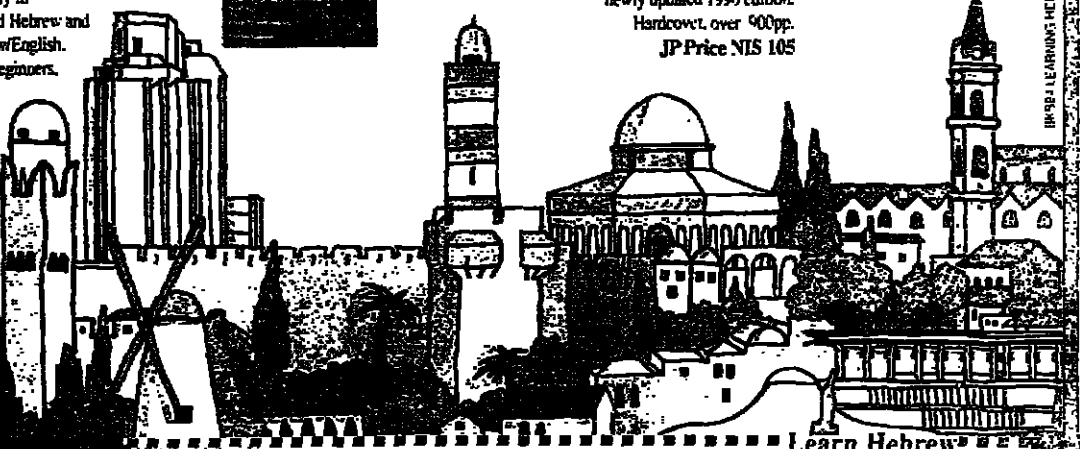
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Economic crisis turns Thai tycoon into peddler

By DAVID LAMB

BANGKOK — Sirivat Voravetvuthikun has been on the streets for two hours peddling his homemade sandwiches. The morning is heavy with a steamy heat, and he mops his brow as he heads toward a new corner with more foot traffic, doing some mental calculations on the way.

Let's see. So far 30 tuna salads, 26 or 27 ham-and-cheeses, probably 40 crab meats. "I should do 200 sandwiches today despite the heat," he finally notes. "Customers come looking for me now. They say, 'If it's not a Sirivat Sandwich, I don't want it.'"

There are hundreds of vendors like Sirivat on Bangkok's narrow, congested streets, selling everything from watches to noodles, but what makes Sirivat different is that the 49-year-old has a business degree from the University of Texas and at this time last year was a multimillionaire developer and stockbroker.

It is a familiar story in a Southeast Asia racked by economic crisis.

He was the CEO of one of Thailand's top brokerages. The

economy was booming and everyone was buying on margin. He started developing luxury residential condos, and whatever he wanted, the banks obliged.

Even when interest rates shot up to 17 percent, then 30%, he kept borrowing, developing, dreaming, living as if good times would last forever.

"Big was beautiful. Small was ugly," he said, taking a customer's 30 baht (80 cents) for a crab-meat sandwich. "Everyone was bullish on Thailand. We all lived beyond our means. Then the sky fell to Earth. So, looking back, I'd have to admit frankly that, yes, I was part of the problem."

Sirivat still owes millions on his failed businesses. But the sandwich business puts food on the table and gives him breathing room while he tries to figure out how to salvage at least part of his empire. Hard times for Thailand aren't over, he says, but he predicts with surety: "Our country will recover and survive and eventually prosper. Of that I am confident."

As Thailand takes its first steps toward economic recovery — with

a currency that has stabilized, a prime minister who is both honest and popular and a bruised ego that is on the mend — people such as Sirivat have come to symbolize the changes in attitude and behavior that are shaping a new Thai society.

With most of Asia's economies seemingly disintegrating — most alarmingly, Japan's — Thailand serves as evidence that there is a bottom. Although the economy here is small, it symbolizes both Asia's problems and its potential. Indeed, it was the devaluation of Thailand's currency nearly a year ago that triggered the unraveling of the region.

And today, if perception is almost as important as reality in influencing a country's economic vicissitudes, then Thailand has, as Michel Camdessus, chief of the International Monetary Fund, said, "distinctly turned the corner" toward recovery.

Foreign investors perceive that Thailand is no longer in a free fall and that its government is serious about reform. Some are sniffing around for bargains. And Thailand's 65 million people perceive that the threat of total col-

lapse is over. The panic they felt six months ago has been replaced by an acceptance of the fact that the free-wheeling times are gone. Instead of despairing, Thais are cutting back.

They are driving less, and for the first time in a decade Bangkok is not crippled by traffic jams. Telecommunications tycoon Adisai Bodharamik has sold his private jet. Military units grow their own food. Bureaucrats turn off unneeded office lights. And thousands of educated Thais such as Sirivat take menial jobs to see them through until the wobbly economy finds its legs.

"Thais... adjust themselves easily, and that's helped a lot," says Sati Uthaisri, vice president of Bangkok Bank. "So has having a prime minister who is a man of integrity. I don't think we're close. People at least have the time now to think about the future again."

In a country where political corruption always has been a perk of office, Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai — referred to by many as "Mr. Clean" — is something of a

revolutionary. Chuan has maintained popularity ratings above 70%, and Thais, who seldom say a favorable word about any politician, find themselves heaping praise on the career public servant.

More details man than a visionary, Chuan put together a respected team of technocrats and educated economics advisers. His net worth, as disclosed by Thai law, is \$138,000 (compared with \$48 million for the wealthiest member of his cabinet). For 20 years he has rented a simple house owned by a law school classmate.

Elected in November with an overwhelming public mandate to do what was necessary to fix Thailand's economy, Chuan closed 56 shaky financial companies, some linked to well-connected businessmen. He slashed state spending and presented parliament with a balanced budget for fiscal 1999; raised gas taxes; met President Clinton in Washington and came home with a \$1.7 billion aid package; and purged the leadership of the central bank, whose attempt to defend the baht last year drained

foreign reserves from \$36.6b. to \$2.5b.

Last month, Chuan and his finance minister turned over the governorship of the central bank to Chatumongkol Sonakul, a longtime critic of the bank. The elegant mansion that houses the central bank, where Chatumongkol now works was once the home of the king of Siam, his great-grandfather.

A few Western countries have accepted Chuan's invitation to help revitalize the economy. In March, the Dutch banking giant Abn-Amro announced that it would assume majority control of Bank of Asia, Thailand's 11th-largest bank, and financier George Soros and a consortium of other investors agreed to put \$650 million into the Nakornchai Strip Mill, a steel plant. Citicorp and ING Group of the Netherlands have been scouting for opportunities.

All this hardly means that Thailand is out of the woods yet, and Finance Minister Tarrin Nimmanahaeminda warned in May: "If you think things have already gotten better, that is completely the wrong signal."

Indeed, the stock market hit a 10-year low May 27, and by year's end, 2 million Thais — 6% of the work force — could be looking for jobs. To overcome its liquidity crunch, Thailand needs to attract more foreign capital and prevent private money from being parked abroad. Thailand's growth forecast for this year is minus 4%.

In trying to reinvent itself, Thailand has some safety nets: The country is a food exporter, so people will not starve. Inflation has remained relatively low at 10%. The IMF is implementing a \$17b. bailout. And, significantly, Thailand — unlike Indonesia under former President Suharto — is a democracy with built-in vents that enable people to let off the steam of anger and frustration.

"You know, people say to me: 'You're bankrupt. Isn't that awful?'" says Sirivat, exchanging his last sandwich — a ham-and-cheese — for 30 baht. "And you know what I tell them? I say: 'Well, I'm alive. And any day of the week, I'd rather be a bankrupt sandwich seller than a dead rich person.'" (Los Angeles Times)

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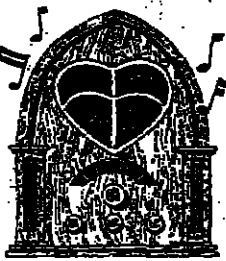
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How to travel to Israel

A dreamy set of Pumpkins

In Tune



By David Brinn

Probably no band takes itself as seriously as The Smashing Pumpkins, and it's one of the few that can justify its self-importance with the ongoing quality of its music.

On *Adore*, Billy Corgan puts away his arena rock guitar riffs that have made the Pumpkins the US's most popular mainstream rock band. Instead, we get a sub-

By turning their backs on a sure-fire trademark sound, The Smashing Pumpkins band members have opened new creative doors that break through the usually narrow rock confines. More power to them. Now, if they could just smile once in a while.

SMILING is no problem if you're listening to Fastball's *All the Pain Money Can Buy*. For the last month I've been hearing a song which the DJs never ID, the kind of song which becomes a timeless radio classic the second it's heard. Who was it, I wondered?

Lo and behold, "The Way" is the lead track on this young Austin, Texas trio's second album. Built upon one of those trademark Steve Miller mid 1970s riffs and an early '80s New Wave sheen, "The Way" worms its way into the memory. From its intriguing, mysterious lyrics about an elderly couple who take off for parts unknown to the exuberant chunky guitar riffs on the chorus, the song is a summer hit. The good news is the rest of the album sparkles almost as much.

Timeless sing-alongs, a powerful melodic punch and a sardonic humor are the compass points for the band's pure pop. Figuring that the point of rock is not to take itself too seriously, the band bashes out two- to three-minute expertly crafted songs without bothering to analyze or ponder. The shimmering jangle guitar rock is reminiscent of The Gin Blossoms, but the trio embellishes their guitar-bass-drums punk lineup with horns, organ and inventive arrangements. This is a winner all the way around. Get it now.

A SHAMELESS foray into the Austin Powers netherworld world of Sixties go-go pop, Saint Etienne's eighth (!) album *Good Humor* (I confess I've never heard of them) is best listened to wearing bell-bottoms and a flowing scarf.

Once you're in the spirit, then the British group's slices of keyboard-based shock is quite gear. Featuring the chirpy vocals of Sarah Cracknell, Good Humor brings Petula Clark back smack



The three members of The Smashing Pumpkins ought to smile once in a while.

dab in the middle of downtown once again.

LOOKING for the perfect bar/bar mitzva gift for the pop-oriented but unsophisticated young ear? *Gush Dance Club 6* offers 18 sticks of bubble gum, each one more sugary than the previous.

The best known name here is Aqua, those wacky folks responsible for "Barbie Girl." But their offering here, as well as those by acts none of us have ever heard of if we're over 13, like Cleopatra, Aqua and Scooter prove that the Sixties didn't corner the market on dumb. Most of the tracks make

those bubble gum Hall of Famers the Spice Girls look like Joni Mitchell.

But hey, I bought "Yummy, Yummy" when I was 12, and still consider it great poetry. History may also look at the non-hit wonders on *Gush Dance Club 6* in a more positive light.

A prodigious experience for Techno teens

CONCERT ROUNDUP

The energy flowed through a mostly teenage audience of over 10,000 at Tel Aviv's

PRODIGY

Hayarkon Park
June 4

Hayarkon Park. If you can imagine dancing with a swarm of Israelis adorned with funky dyed

hair and multiple body piercings, then you can visualize the Prodigy experience.

Prodigy is one step ahead of other Techno bands. The musical creativity behind the band comes from its front man, Liam Howlett, but on stage it is Keith Flint and MC Maxim Reality whose dynamic voices and explosive expression roar out. The four members stimulated the crowd with a powerful sound and intense performance.

Though the average price of a ticket was NIS 140, Prodigy's highly energetic performance lasted only 90 minutes. Yet the young crowd danced as hard as they could for the entire show.

Prodigy is the biggest Techno band that has ever performed here. This Dance & Leisure concert signals that Techno music is not simply a fad but has a large following

ISRAEL SINFONETTA/
URI MAYER
Serenades by Mozart and Dvorak
Beersheva Conservatory
May 31

in this country. (Techno puts together synthesizers, music samples and lyrics to produce a continuous vibrating series of beats and sounds that could never be simulated by human beings).

Prodigy creates its own, unique sound, filled with deep bass and accented with high beat patterns by combining synthesized music along with a strong rock and metal influence.

Since 1991, Prodigy released three successful albums, but at this gig the band concentrated on their most recent work, featuring his such as "Firestarter" and "Breathe." All but one of the songs they performed promoted their 1997 disc *The Fat of the Land*.

URI MAYER led the Sinfonietta in four appealing, well-known serenades. Dvorak's Bohemian-fla-

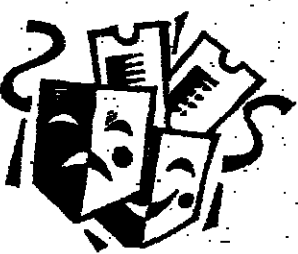
vorah *Wind Serenade*, op. 44, featured oboes, clarinets, and bassoons in pairs, a trio of horns and, to add to the unusual combination - a cello and contrabass. Mozart's *Serenade Notturno*, K. 279, sets principal string leaders against tutti sections concertato fashion, with a timpani tossed in for good measure. Notable were violin solos by concert master Yaron Prenskey. Works - for strings only - were Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, K. 525, and Dvorak's *Serenade in E*, op. 22, both popular favorites.

The performances were resilient, styled toward the Romantic.

- Max Stern

No light at the end of Levin's tunnel

Theater Roundup



By Naomi Doudai

There is no local playwright who equals Hanochi Levin for the prolific as well as the sterling quality of his achievements. Nonetheless, where output is so abundant, it is to be expected that there will be occasions when inspiration falters and even

THOSE WHO WALK
IN DARKNESS
Written and directed by
Hanochi Levin
The Rovina Theater, Habimah

such prodigious creative power as his is stretched thin.

Those Who Walk falls into that category.

The theme deals with an esoteric, pseudo-metaphysical concept: the meeting point between life and death.

Peopling the stage with three separate caravans of living, dying and dead grotesques, Levin pumps up his drama in a series of tableaux that have all the carnival colors characteristic of his circus of beleaguered humanity.

Leading the "living" with dynamic performances are Yehuda Almagor, Michael Koresh and Dror Keren. Rozina Kambo heads the "dying" with the degree of required melodrama, while a team of marvelously expressive veterans, among them Avraham Mor, Nachum Buchman, Shmuel



Shaul Mizrahi gives the only credible performance in 'Cooper.'

Shilo, Yossi Segal, Rina Rosenbaum, Miriam Nevo, Lupu Bercovich, and Tehiya Danon, gives grimly comic portrayals of "the dead."

Despite the overall excellence of the 40 performers - including Dov Reiser, suave in the role of the narrator - this piece, for all its heavily loaded morbidity and profound philosophic pretensions,

fails to grip.

For one thing, the allegorical characterizations of cerebral abstractions like Herring Thought, Pyramid Thought, Evasion, Bitterness, and Desperation, are vague projections.

Blurred and disconnected, interest in their development soon dissipates with the weak pattern that underlies the ongoing action. No

real dynamic emerges that will drive it to a riveting climax and carry the audience with it.

Those who, disembodied or otherwise, walk on stage in an all-encompassing darkness are left groping for light and meaning as was this humble but helpless spectator down below.

IT IS by now a well-established fact that after years of neglect, the Israeli play - good, mediocre, or worse than weak - has become hot box office. This is because theater management have slowly come to realize that local playwrights deal with issues and conflicts that involve actors and audiences alike in familiar situations and generate electricity between them.

The result, if not always first-class drama, is what audiences believe to be "good theater."

According to one well-known artistic director, this means that directors, on the look-out for the next Israeli hit, buy up rights indiscriminately and stage them without selection. Playwrights who for years couldn't sell a play to a theater, he declares, now take out anything they have in their drawers and find ready buyers.

It could be that with *Cooper* we have another example of this recent phenomenon.

Author of almost a dozen plays, Bar Yosef reaches the lowest level yet of creativity with this one - in structure, plot and characterization.

Cooper deals with a familiar family debacle involving a father-daughter (Yossi Pollak, Michaela Eshet) lifetime confrontation. A supine mother (Miriam Zohar) is the helpless go-between.

Director Micah Lowensohn, with some deft direction, manages to infuse some dynamic into a stormy but static situation. His handling of the actors is, however, less impressive.

Pollak, as the manic-obsessive

collector of other people's trash, rages his way unrestrained

COOPER
By Yosef Bar Yosef
Beit Lessia Theater

through endless monologues. With Eshet, a caterwauling antagonist, he turns the domestic scene, with its catastrophic clutter, into an arena closer to a bullring.

In contrast to the rip-roaring performance of the principals, Shaul Mizrahi as Morde, the daughter's partner, delivers a character that has the quiet, constrained quality of a deeply felt role.

His is the only portrayal that approaches credibility in what should have been offered as an unpretentious one-act play.

A modern, melodious 'Song of Songs'



ISRAEL FESTIVAL REVIEWS

Gil Shohat's cantata *Song of Songs*, commissioned by and world-premiered at the festival, is a welcome addition to the local choral repertoire. Its musical language is direct, fresh, communicative and listener-friendly.

The work, based on the biblical text, sounds light and joyous, free of pomposity, and uncontaminat-

'SONG OF SONGS'
Gil Shohat
Henry Crown
June 4

ed by sophisticated avant-garde conventions, despite being composed in the 20th century.

It indulges in agreeable melodiousness, frequently imaginative and inventive, though sometimes harking back to earlier styles, without being preoccupied with ambitions of originality at all cost. The orchestration abounds in attractive, constantly changing instrumental colors.

The light-winged, rhythmically inspired "I am black and pretty, the impassioned "Thou art beautiful, my love" (tenor Claudio di Segni), and the dreamily opening "I sleep and my heart is awake" (soprano Sharon Rostorf) are among the work's highlights. Some vocal lines are captivating enough to deserve some thinning out of the simultaneous orchestral forces for increased audibility and impact of the voices.

The Rheinische Kantorei Choir from Germany accomplished a remarkable achievement of impeccably enunciating the Hebrew text.

The Ra'anana Symphonette, conducted by Yuval Zaliouk, rendered the orchestral part with involvement and enthusiasm.

A selection of a *capella* motets by Schein and Bach, performed impressively and faithfully to style by the Rheinische Kantorei, conducted by Herman Max, contributed an appropriate opening to the evening.

ORGANIST Marie-Claire Alain's playing is as fresh and vibrant as ever. Despite some artistic liberties and occasional

MARIE-CLAIRE ALAIN
Dormition Abbey
June 3

unorthodoxies that she can well permit herself in her interpretations of Bach, her subtle registrations, delicate pianissimi and clarity of intricate textures are captivating.

A certain rare elegance in organ work BV 572, perhaps a French contribution to Bach's universality, contrasted impressively with the more Germanic solemnity of the piece's conclusion.

In Francois Couperin and in Balbastre's *Noel*, it was French gaiety and the selection of reedy registers that imparted an ingratiating charm to these works. The *Scherzo* by Albert Alain, the organist's father, impressed with its playfulness - a quality not frequently encountered in organ music.

The deceased younger brother Jehan Alain's *Litanies* radiated 20th-century energies and unpredictable chordal progression, combining modernist imagination with classic refined taste.

NOAM Sheriff, in his triple capacity of composer, arranger and conductor, presented a selection of his vocal and chamber works in a concert entitled *Tribute to Noam Sheriff*. Alto

Ella Sheriff, a chief tributary, performed a world premiere of her

NOAM SHERIFF
Targ Music Center, Ein Kerem
June 6

husband's *Lullabies* and *Madrigals*. These skillfully manipulate Sephardi and East-European Jewish traditional ingredients, a formula reliably evoking sympathetic responses from large segments of the audience. The use of the only rarely encountered oboe d'amore (Avner Itai), dueting with the voice, attracted particular interest.

A first performance of an arrangement of De Falla's popular Spanish songs hardly rendered the composer a service. A superb orchestrator himself, one may credit De Falla with the capability of writing an instrumental version on his own, had he felt so inclined. Despite the original piano part's assertiveness, the intimacy was eliminated by Sheriff's version that also made life difficult for the singer.

Ella Sheriff, in her arrangement of Kurt Will's songs, maneuvered herself into competing with an overly heavy ensemble. Voice-wise, she valiantly attempted to emulate the inimitable models of Marlene Dietrich and Lotte Lenya, though without coming close to their characteristic ironic bite.

The string Quartet Rosendorf represented Sheriff's achievement in purely instrumental chamber music.

PILOBOLUS Dance Theater, with its particular form of dance entertainment, reached its 27th year with its path well established.

In the early 1970s, their unique kinetic body sculptures, the gymnastic elements, and the abstract treatment of the human form were considered an expansion of the

PILOBOLUS DANCE
THERATER
Sherover Theater
June 4

dance field boundaries. It was fresh and full of humorous surprises.

Now the expectations keep coming, but the surprises are getting rarer. Out of five dances, two plotless ones still hold the pleasurable flavor of Pilobolus. *The Double Cube* and particularly *Gnomes*. At their best, the dancers leisurely perform some incredibly demanding moves with their muscle power. Though the work is abstract, the highly logical physical interaction of their bodies, the fluid line of energy that runs among them, is touching, warm and wise. It contained a great measure of beauty.

- Ora Brafman

TODAY AT THE FESTIVAL

Jerusalem Theater
Sherover - Maly Theater, *Brothers and Sisters* (6 hrs.), 4 p.m.

Henry Crown - The Andalusian Orchestra with Tea Packs, Moroccan classical music with rock, 9 p.m.

Little Theater - *Who's Afraid of the Wind?*, children's theater (Hebrew), 5 p.m.

Plaza - *Miniatures*, ballet; the Surprise Choir; Both at 6 p.m. (Kids); Shiraz Ensemble, Persian music, 7:45 p.m.; violin, cello and piano trio, 9 p.m.

Foyer - Rubin Academy Big Band, 7:30 p.m.; Jazz Around the World, Patchko Jazz Quartet, midnight.

Mann Auditorium - Tel Aviv English Concert: Handel's *Messiah*, 8 p.m.

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Integrating Jerusalem

When King David chose Jerusalem as his capital about 3,000 years ago, the city he chose was not where the bustling center of town is today, nor even within the current Old City walls. David's city was perched on a small, sloping peninsula of land between two deep valleys, near the only source of fresh water in the area.

Today, that strip of land is occupied by the Arab neighborhood of Silwan, archaeological sites, and a small compound of Jewish homes.

As the ancient city of David lies peacefully under the debris that has accumulated for millennia, on the surface all is not so calm. Yesterday, members of Elad, a group dedicated to increasing the Jewish presence in the most ancient part of the city, moved on to the roof of a house they had purchased. Protests quickly ensued, with the Palestinians' Jerusalem point man, Faisal Hussein, and Israeli Peace Now activists on one side, and the Elad members on the other.

The scrap over some houses in the City of David followed quickly on the heels of a similar dispute over an empty lot near Herod's Gate in the Old City's Moslem Quarter, this time owned by Ateret Cohanim. In both cases, as with the Ras el-Amud project that caused an even greater stir a few months ago, the issue is whether it is appropriate for Jews to move into what are now predominantly Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem. Though the Har Homa project was opposed as vehemently by the Palestinians, that site is located on an empty hilltop, so there is no issue of building within an existing Arab neighborhood.

Ateret Cohanim and Elad argue that Jews have the right to live on property they legally own anywhere in the world, certainly within Israel, and most certainly within Jerusalem. They also argue that they are not just resurrecting an ancient Jewish presence in Jerusalem, but that at the turn of the century over two-thirds of what is now the Moslem Quarter was Jewish, and hundreds of Jewish families lived in the City of David. The Jews fled both areas during the Arab riots beginning in the 1920s, so, it can be argued, current Jewish settlement efforts are restoring the character of the area that had been changed by the Arabs.

This is, essentially, what the Supreme Court argued in the 1978 Bruckman case, in which a Jordanian citizen sued for the right to bid on property in the Jewish Quarter. The court denied him permission on the grounds that the state had spent millions restoring the Jewish Quarter after its destruction under Jordanian rule, and that the right to bid should therefore be restricted to Israeli citizens.

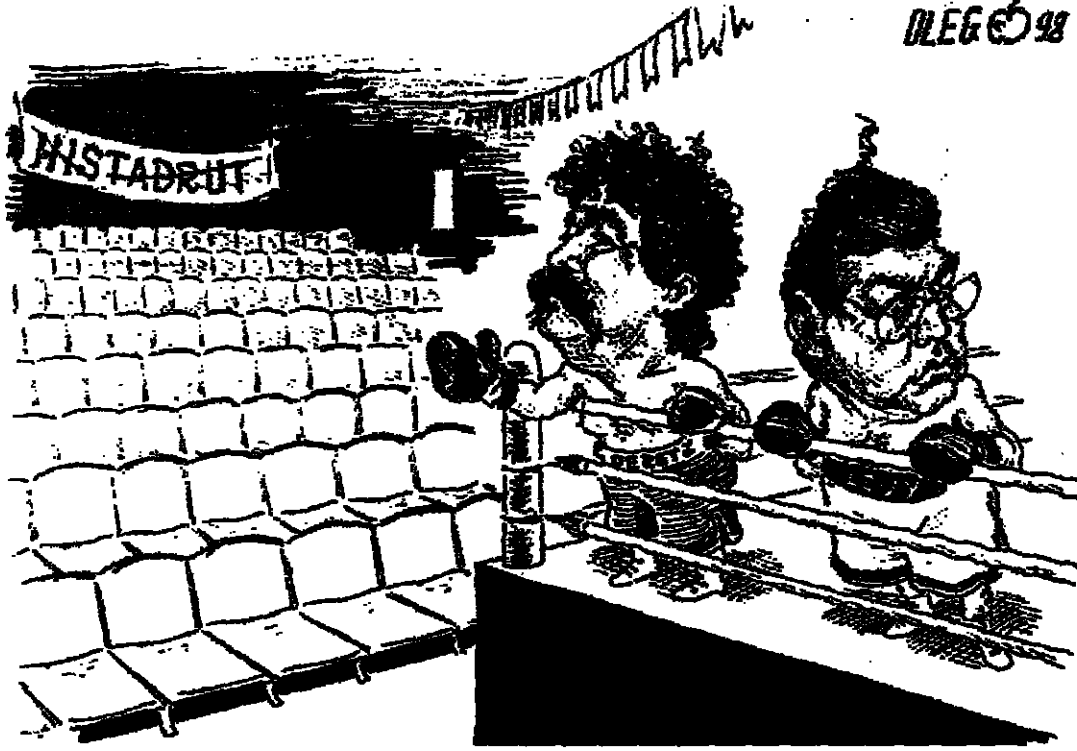
In the same ruling, however, the court argued that the reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter was warranted so that "Jews would have again, like they had in the past, a quarter of their own, along side the quarters of the Moslems, Christians, and Armenians. There is no discrimination in the individuality of these quarters, each quarter with its own ethnicity." In other words, the court recognized that property rights alone did not determine what was best for society, and that it is legitimate to maintain the ethnic character of different neighborhoods. Jerusalem in particular is a patchwork of neighborhoods even within Jewish areas, with some areas almost entirely Jewish, others almost entirely Arab, and many a mixture between secular and religious.

Normally, it is neither necessary nor desirable to maintain such distinctions with legal discrimination. It is not normally necessary because most people, Arabs or Jews, do not want to live in neighborhoods in which they are islands in a sea of another people.

The members of Ateret Cohanim and Elad break this mold because they are moving into currently Arab neighborhoods with the express purpose of changing their character. However, solid their case, historically and legally, the questions of timing and tactics remain.

If and when a final-status agreement is concluded between Israel and the Palestinians, the Old City and the City of David will both remain under Israeli sovereignty, but will newly be internationally recognized as such.

In that context, it makes sense to encourage, slowly and voluntarily, Jewish-Arab integration, particularly where there is a strong historic Jewish connection to the area. Until then, however, ideologically and politically driven integration is a recipe for conflict that serves no one, not even the cause of a united Jerusalem.



24 hours is enough

EVELYN GORDON

Almost a year ago, a law that significantly improved civil rights in Israel went into effect. The law stated that anyone arrested by the police must either be released or remanded by a judge within 24 hours, rather than the 48-hour period the police had previously enjoyed.

The police opposed the law, and have never ceased trying to undermine it. Last week, they won a major victory in this effort: Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi agreed to set up a team, composed of representatives from both his ministry and the Ministry of Internal Security, to propose changes in the law. The police are aiming for complete elimination of the 24-hour clause, claiming that their job of crime-fighting is not possible unless they are able to hold anyone for 48 hours, at their sole discretion.

It is somewhat remarkable that the Israeli police are so willing to make what essentially amounts to a declaration of incompetence. Almost every other Western country has had a 24-hour limit on arrests for years, and their police forces seem able to cope.

Indeed, the joint Justice-Internal Security team might better use its time investigating why Israel's police force is unable to meet Western standards in this respect, and what can be done to correct this problem. However, the idea that the Israeli public should pay the price of this incompetence not only through higher crime rates, but also through the arbitrary loss of their liberty, is unconscionable.

If one could be sure that the police were only arresting genuine criminals, the difference between 24 and 48 hours might not matter much. The data, however, do not support this comforting assumption.

The 1995 State Comptroller's Report - which was the impetus for the revision in the arrest law - found that a whopping 40 percent of all police arrests were unjustified, unnecessary or downright illegal. The report, based on a study of some 64,000 arrests in 1992-93, found that 24.5 percent were later released without even being questioned; 3 percent were simply arrested illegally; and in another 12.5 percent of cases, the arrest was not necessary to the investigation.

This is one of the highest rates of unjustified arrest in the Western world. Police claim the percentages have improved since then, but no comprehensive study by an outside body, such as the State Comptroller's Office, has been done to back up their claim.

Even had these figures been cut in half, however, they would still not be the kind of statistics that would encourage one to trust the police with the right to hold people arbitrarily for twice as long as they now can. An unjustified arrest rate of 20 percent would still be enormous.

COMPOUNDING the problem is the fact that conditions in police lock-ups are universally acknowledged to be horrendous. Over the past few years, numerous delegations from every segment of the political spectrum have emerged from visits to the lock-ups with this same conclusion.

This makes the idea of allowing the police to hold possibly innocent people for 48 hours without a warrant even more unacceptable.

That a reversal of the 24-hour law can be seriously entertained is largely due to Justice Minister

Hanegbi's chronic inability to take a principled stand on anything.

Previous justice ministers have considered the protection of civil rights to be their duty.

Former justice minister David Liba'i (Labor), for instance, was the one who submitted the 24-hour bill to the Knesset. Though his bill was much narrower in scope - applying the shorter limit only to certain types of cases - he chose not to withdraw the bill when the Knesset Law Committee expanded it to apply to all cases.

And another former justice minister, Dan Meridor (Likud), was one of the Law Committee members most active in drafting the expanded version of the bill.

Hanegbi, however, has, as usual, chosen to fence-sit. While he considers the law an important bulwark against unprincipled arrests, he said, the police's objections must be considered seriously in light of the steady increase in crime.

Apparently, Hanegbi considers a drastic reduction in Israelis' civil rights a much easier solution to the crime problem than trying to solve the structural flaws that make the police unable to cope with the shorter time limit.

Fortunately, the 24-hour limit does have one powerful potential champion in the government. According to MK Dedi Zucker (Meretz) - who, as Law Committee chairman, was the driving force behind the law's passage - two MKs in particular worked closely with him to produce it. One, as mentioned above, was Meridor. The other was Yitzhak Levy (NRP) - the current education minister. It is to be hoped that Levy will take the lead in making his colleagues understand that a revocation of this bill is unacceptable.

Starr above the law

ALAN DERSHOWITZ

Kenneth Starr is acting as if he were above the law. He apparently believes that it is improper for lawyers to invoke entirely lawful procedures which make his biased search for "truth" more difficult. In a recent speech, he did not explicitly mention his current investigation against the president, but he intended to send a message to President Clinton's lawyers and the rest of the criminal defense bar. This is what he said:

"Lawyers have a duty not to use their skills to impede the search for truth." He also implicitly threatened lawyers who tried to impede his investigation with obstruction-of-justice charges, suggesting that such charges might be appropriate even if the alleged impeding took the form of invoking lawful privileges. As an experienced lawyer and judge, he should know better.

If it is in the interest of a client to invoke the lawyer-client privilege, the husband-wife privilege, or the priest-penitent privilege, the lawyer must do so, or risk being guilty of ineffective assistance of counsel.

The role of the defense attorney is not to make it easier for the prosecutor to convict his client. The defense lawyer's duty is to his client, not to the prosecutor's "search for truth." The Bill of Rights was not designed to make the job of prosecuting accused criminals easier. It was designed to strike an appropriate balance between the societal "search for truth" and the preservation of important individual rights, such as privacy, autonomy and zealous representation. The safeguards of the Constitution apply to president and pauper alike. The president is not above the law, but neither is he below the law.

BUT Kenneth Starr doesn't see it that way. He regards his "search for truth" as an end which justifies any means. So did those who conducted the Inquisition and the Star Chamber. He urges lawyers to be "guided not simply by the client's interests" but by society's interests as well.

That is what Stalin expected from Soviet lawyers. Such a rule would require the criminal defense lawyer to serve two masters at the same time, thus creating a conflict of interest.

Starr tells the lawyer to say "no to the client... we can't argue that." But if the argument is legally and ethically available and will serve the client's interests, the lawyer has no right to say no. He must argue "that," regardless of how unpalatable "that" may be to his personal taste. The lawyer is acting in a representational capacity, not in a personal one. He is the client's representative in the legal matter.

The lawyer need not accept the case - unless he is appointed by the court - but if the lawyer does accept the case, he must do everything legal and ethical to serve his client's interests, even if that means helping a guilty client to be acquitted.

Starr cites the fictional lawyer Atticus Finch as his paradigm. But Finch had an easy case: His client was innocent. What if Finch's client - a hated black man in a Southern white town - had been guilty? Should Finch have stood up in court and proclaimed his client's guilt?

Or what if his client's innocence or guilt were not clear? Should Finch have told the jury that the case was a close one? No, the job of a criminal defense lawyer is to be an advocate for his client's cause.

I'm certain Starr recognizes that role when he serves as an advocate for his cigarette clients. I don't remember him disclosing his client's secret in the search for the truth that was being conducted by the plaintiff's lawyers in the cigarette cases. Indeed, the obligation of a criminal defense lawyer to his client is greater - and more rooted in the Constitution - than the obligation of a civil lawyer.

Starr has the right to his personal opinion, wrong and hypocritical as it may be, but he has also begun to threaten lawyers who disagree with him. The threat may be subtle, but coming from a prosecutor, it has a chilling effect on zealous advocacy. Starr asks the following pregnant question:

"At what point does a lawyer's manipulation of the legal system become an obstruction of truth?" The answer should be clear: only when the lawyer violates the rules.

And no lawyer violates any rules when he employs the rules - including all available privileges and exclusionary rules - in the interest of his client, whether the lawyer believes his client to be innocent, guilty or somewhere in between.

(United Feature Syndicate)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ARAB RESPONSIBILITY

Sir, - The vast majority of the Palestinian Arabs who left Israel in 1948, did so of their own free will. They were not expelled. Even Benny Morris, the best known of the Israeli "revisionists" who criticize Israel's behavior in 1948, concedes that the bulk of the refugees chose to leave.

Describing the Palestinian Arab emigration in the spring of 1948, which he calls "the main wave of the Arab exodus," Morris concludes that 70 percent of the Arabs who left were trying to get out of the way of "military operations" in or near the towns (Middle East Studies, Jan. 1986, pp. 9-10).

Others left because of orders from local Arab leaders. For example, Morris recounts (The

Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, p. 73) how the Arab departure from Haifa, "which alone accounted for some 10 percent of the total of Palestine Arab refugees," was the result of orders by Haifa's Arab leaders "to evacuate Haifa" (pp. 82-84). And the Arab exodus from Haifa, in turn, "was a major direct precipitant and indirect cause of the subsequent flight of Arabs from the Haifa sub-district and other areas of the country, including Jaffa, Acre and Safed" (p. 73).

There were a few local instances in which individual Israeli military commanders, on the battlefield, felt it necessary to order the relocation of hostile Arabs to other areas. For example, in July 1948,

David Ben-Gurion authorized Lt. Col. Yitzhak Rabin to relocate the Arabs from the towns of Ramle and Lydda, after the Arabs there feigned surrender and then unleashed a wave of sniper attacks on Israeli soldiers.

What happened in Ramle and Lydda may not have been a pleasant episode, but no wars are pleasant, and since it was the Arabs who launched a war to exterminate the Jews, it is they who must bear the responsibility for what ensued.

MORTON A. KLEIN
National President
Zionist Organization of America

New York.

CARE AND ATTENTION

Sir, - Please allow me, through the medium of your newspaper, to express my appreciation of the helpfulness and care I experienced during a recent spell as an invalid in Israel.

Having come to Israel with the South African contingent for the Mahal reunion, my enjoyment of the excellent program was cut short when I broke a leg during our visit to the air force base at Ramat David.

I cannot speak highly enough of the care and attention I received. I was taken immediately by army

ambulance to Afula Hospital. After receiving essential medical attention there, I was given the opportunity of being transferred to Ichilov in Tel Aviv.

I have been so overwhelmed with kindness from Mahalniks on the tour and those living in Israel, that once again I felt the camaraderie and concern for one another, which we knew in 1948.

I am also very grateful to the medical staff at both hospitals and to the many total strangers in Israel who have been so helpful and concerned about my welfare.

WHERE IS JERUSALEM?

Sir, - My wife and I recently had a child born in Jerusalem. We are both American citizens, so we reported to the US consulate to register our new family member and to get him a passport.

I was shocked and dismayed when the Consular Report of Birth Abroad (Birth Certificate) arrived stating that the city of birth was Jerusalem, but in three

separate and distinct spaces on this official US form, the country of birth was missing.

I called the consulate and asked why this was left blank on both birth certificate and passport. I was informed by a government employee that the US has not determined who controls Jerusalem. I was also told that the official American view of Jerusalem is that it is an occupied

city. In addition to the daily visits and the get-well telephone calls I received from Israel, the US, Britain and South Africa I could stock a confectionery shop with the gifts of chocolates and other goodies sent to me.

Now that I am about to return to Krugersdorp, I must say a heartfelt thank you. Despite my accident, my visit was rejuvenating and more than worthwhile.

KENNY DANKER

Krugersdorp, South Africa.

With Israel's closest ally, the United States, having a foreign policy like this, it strengthened in me the belief that Israel's only true friend is Israel.

With friends like this, who needs an enemy?

DR. SCOTT LAWRENCE

Jerusalem.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On June 9, 1933, The Palestine Post reported that the battle for Jeddah was still raging. Tel Aviv was bombed once more.

50 years ago: On June 9, 1948, The Palestine Post reported that

the battle for Jeddah was still raging. Tel Aviv was bombed once more.

Egyptian artillery joined the Arab Legion in the shelling of Jewish Jerusalem, which was under fire for the 25th consecu-

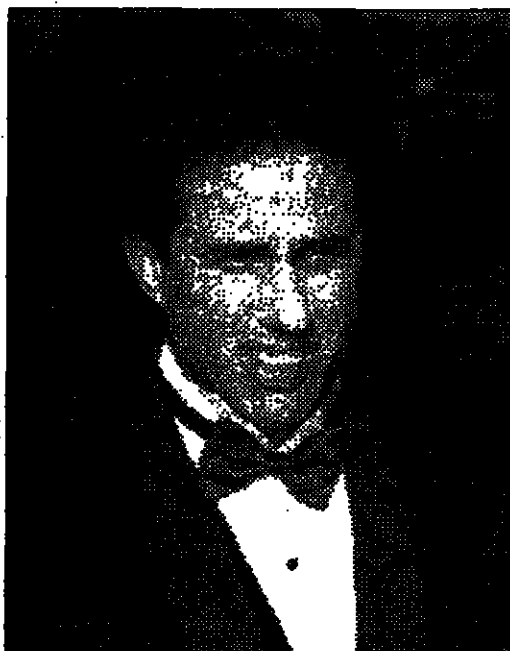
tive day. A call-up order affecting all Jewish men in Jerusalem between the ages of 18 and 45 was issued with immediate effect.

Alexander Zvielli

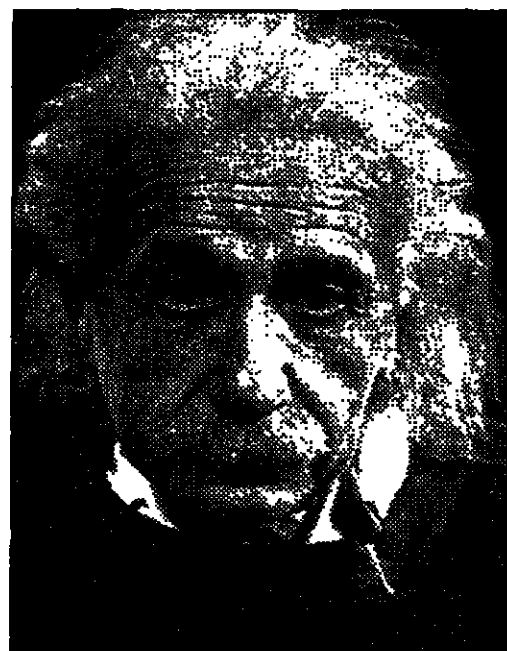
The writer is a Tsomet MK and deputy minister.

Those who 'wrestle with God'

What is the uniquely Jewish contribution to America? How do people as diverse as Jerry Seinfeld and Albert Einstein fit into it? The question matters, Josh Getlin writes, as US Jewry agonizes over its absorption into the US mainstream and the gradual erosion of its identity



(UPPA)



(Reuters)



It's hard to find a Jewish factor linking the gifts of (clockwise, from top left) Jerry Seinfeld, Albert Einstein, Bob Dylan and George Burns. Could Jews' rich contribution to American national life diminish along with their identity?

American Jews seem uncomfortable asking — let alone answering — a key question: What have Jews given to American national culture that is distinctively Jewish?

"We've spent years asking how America has affected Jewish people, how it's changed us," said Rabbi Alfred Wolf, founding director of the Skirball Institute on American Values and rabbi emeritus of Los Angeles' Wilshire Boulevard Temple. "But when you turn that question around, you don't hear much of an answer."

The easy temptation is to offer a laundry list of Jews and their achievements — a Hall of Fame top-heavy with Nobel Prize winners, dramatists, musicians and artists; a parade of business leaders, movie moguls, educators, journalists and entertainers who have influenced the American scene.

Yet in searching for a deeper answer to the question — a theory that might explain the contributions of people as diverse as Jerry Seinfeld and Albert Einstein — there's a silence in the literature about Judaism and American life.

The issue matters because, as Jews look ahead, they are racked with internal debates over their absorption into the US mainstream and its gradual erosion of their identity.

If Jews are truly imperiled by their success in America, will their rich contributions to its national life diminish along with their identity?

"The farther away you get from the source of your tradition the less of a contribution you might be expected to make in a place like America," said Rabbi David Wolpe of Sinai Temple, the oldest Conservative Jewish congregation in Los Angeles. "We could lose something precious."

"Jewish angst is the source of Nobel prizes, and it's also what makes Sammy run. It's political dissent... and a gift of dialogue, a habit of raising deep ethical questions about the world around us"

Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg

mark of being different. Unlike other persecuted people, Wolpe noted, Jews have never wholly adopted the values of those who despise them. They have long valued education, teaching the importance of intellectual freedom.

It's a potent mixture, coloring Jews across the spectrum, from the most rigidly devout to those distant from the faith.

"I have Jewish friends who are lefties, social activists, and they do not practice their religion," said Rabbi Camille Angel of New York's Congregation Rodeph Shalom. "But when you ask why they get involved, they'll answer it's because we were all slaves under Pharaoh." "You were strangers in the land of Egypt." The phrase is repeated 36 times in the Torah — so how can Jews ignore the less fortunate in their midst?

At the same time, no matter how comfortable they become in a place like America, Jews carry bitter memories of persecution — from Pharaoh to Hitler.

"People at the margins always see more than people at the center," said Thomas Cahill, author of *The Gifts of the Jews*.

Since colonial times, American Jews have been seized by a collective angst that is unique, according to Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, a historian, philosopher and talmudic scholar.

"This Jewish angst is the source of Nobel prizes, and it's also what makes Sammy run," he said. "It takes many disguises: It's political dissent; it drives an enormous cultural contribution. It's also a gift of dialogue, a habit of raising deep ethical questions about the world around us."

Politics, culture and ethics: Jews wrestle with all three, but not always honorably.

Well-known Americans such as white-collar criminals Michael Milken and Ivan Boesky paid a price for their wrongdoings. A morally judgmental artist like Woody Allen has sparked pain and controversy over actions in his private life.

"Just because a Jew wrestled with an angel does not make him one," said Wolf. "But on the whole, we have played an important role in our nation's [America's] history." From a political standpoint, that role has been profoundly atypical. As numerous observers have pointed out, Jews are the only successful ethnic group in America that does not routinely vote its pocketbook.

Beginning with the first major wave of immigration in the mid-19th century, American Jews have traditionally aligned themselves with left-leaning politicians and causes. That liberal tilt grew even more as Jews rallied behind Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Today Jews are among the most affluent citizens, yet they have not shed their liberalism and moved to the Right. Among Jews, 46 per-

cent call themselves liberals, 28 percent moderates and only 23 percent conservatives, according to a recent *Los Angeles Times* poll of American Jews.

"Jews have been sensitive to the political climate wherever they are, and because of their history they've been receptive to progressive thought," said Howard Sachar, an author and history professor at George Washington University. "This has been a loyalty based on politics, not religious tradition." For Jews on the political Right, it's a bitter pill to swallow.

NORMAN Podhoretz, former editor of *Commentary* and one of the founders of the neo-conservative movement, suggests that Jewish liberal belief is grounded in nos-

were Jewish.

"Jews gave muscle to that movement, and the muscle was a passion for justice," Cahill said.

This also explains one of the more rapid Jewish assimilations into American life.

"It's no accident that many American Jews have been attracted to constitutional law," said author Cynthia Ozick. "With us, it's always text and argument... the US legal system and Jews are a perfect fit."

There is a similarly tight fit between Jewish traditions and the establishment of social welfare programs, even though there are strong disagreements among Jews of both Right and Left over why this is so.

"I think the welfare state has a helluva lot more to do with the Jew than almost anyone else," Hertzberg said. "This is where the idea came from that the unemployed simply cannot be out on the street. It goes back thousands of years."

Hogwash, said Podhoretz. "You have to be very careful when you ascribe any of this to the Jewish religion," he said. "The more religious a Jew is today, the more likely he is to be conservative. So it's hard to argue that Judaism somehow breeds liberal attitudes."

IF AMERICA gave Jews an intellectual home, it also allowed them to change neighborhoods.

To live on a better side of town, if they so desired. That theme of a restless journey, from old to new, dominates Jewish contributions to American culture.

Consider *The Jazz Singer*, the 1927 film in which Al Jolson made history by talking in a movie for the first time. Wildly successful with mainstream audiences, it was a stark portrayal of the tensions facing Eastern European Jews who were leaving behind the stifling ghettos of their American youth.

Only a Jewish story of change and growth could put "Kol Nidre," perhaps the holiest chant in the faith, on the same program with "Toot, Toot, Tootsie, Goodbye." And the resolution — in which Jolson honors his dying, patriarchal father, but then embarks on a show-biz career — was telling.

"Hollywood told Jewish stories between the lines," Wolpe said.

"Yet those who created the studios are open to criticism, because the real failure of Hollywood and Jewish creativity in America is that it hasn't been Jewish enough."

To be sure, the pioneers of silent and talking films spun fables of family values, loyalty, hard work, respect for the underdog and the need for social justice. In his book, *An Empire of Their Own*, historian Neal Gabler showed how many Jewish producers and moguls were simply repeating the stories of their childhoods in Eastern Europe on the silver screen.

Yet the core Jewish values of education, morality and tradition were absent, Wolpe said. Those who built the studios either downplayed or

were embarrassed by their own Jewishness.

Time after time, Jews making the American journey discover new artistic forms, and the results can be dramatic: Bob Dylan merging folk music and rock; Leonard Bernstein fusing jazz and opera; Alan Ginsburg ushering in a new age of Beat poetry.

Jewish humor has also shaped America. From borscht belt stand-ups to the kings of TV comedy — Jack Benny, Milton Berle and George Burns — Jewish wit has skewered human foibles and made millions laugh at themselves.

"A big reason is that so much of this humor comes from a place of pain," said actor and producer Rob Reiner. "It touches a deep emotional root, because Jews have gone through it all, from Egypt to the pogroms and the Holocaust. Even if you're not Jewish, you can relate to this way of seeing the world."

IN THE Babylonian Talmud, of the four crucial questions God asks before deciding if an individual should gain entrance to heaven, the first is: Did you conduct your affairs honestly?

The ritual of posing and answering such questions is flourishing in America — albeit in mass market disguises — and Jews are contributing to the dialogue.

America's No. 1 radio talk show host, Dr. Laura Schlessinger of Los Angeles, dispenses advice to millions, as do Abigail Van Buren and Ann Landers, a pair of Jewish sisters from Iowa. These modern-day moralists play to a mainstream audience, but there is a core of Jewishness in their personal advice.

Margo Howard, the daughter of *Eppie Lederer* (Landers), said her mother came from a home where common sense prevailed, along with ritual Judaism and the importance of helping others. "Being Jewish colored her emotional development," she said.

"When the opportunity arose for her to answer letters at a newspaper, it was like she had been doing it all her life. She developed a pop Talmud approach, a belief that there is a basic code of right and wrong, and it caught on."

Ethics can sort out the minutiae of daily life, and also questions of life and death. While millions of Jews privately ponder the Holocaust, some have presented the issues of genocide and responsibility on a more public stage.

In 1978, NBC-TV's *Holocaust* stirred a powerful debate. The experience was duplicated 19 years later with the broadcast of Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.

Gerald Green, the award-winning writer of *Holocaust*, believes its message went far beyond the Jewish tragedy, touching on a growing problem in multicultural America.

"We must be very careful in letting our hatreds get out of hand," he explained. "I think we sparked a dialogue. We began grappling with this issue so people could talk things over."

(Los Angeles Times)

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Finding love in a flash

You gotta love those Japanese. There's something about this nation that constantly drives them to find rational technological solutions to the most illogical human biological and psychological urges.

Who else could have come up with the Tamagochi, the irritating electronic pet that became last summer's hottest fad, beeping periodically to remind its owner to press buttons to feed, water and cuddle it?

This summer, it seems they've done it again. Once more those clever minds in Japan have moved ahead with a new way of harnessing technology to serve the human need for companionship.

Last week the world officially welcomed the Lovegety, another electronic device designed to improve the human condition. The goal of the new machine is clear from its name: assisting those who want to "get love."

The Lovegety tackles a central concern for singles – finding a painless and efficient way of locating the perfect mate. Every

them (presuming they are telling the truth). But you never really know what you're getting until you see them in the flesh.

The Lovegety tries to integrate the two methods. Lonely Japanese people – presumably single – hang out in crowded spaces like a bar, disco, or even a bus station, holding primed Lovegeties in their fists.

The device is tuned to a setting representing the kind of date they are after – a drink, dinner, a little karaoke, or something a bit more intimate.

If they are in the presence of another owner of a Lovegety looking for the same thing, a little green light flashes. Hopefully, when the two parties catch sight of each other's flashing lights, sparks will fly.

Only time will tell if this idea can match the worldwide success of the Tamagochi, and whether it might last a bit longer than that rather short-lived craze. Meanwhile, I'm sure that Japanese research and development teams are already at work on the next technological breakthrough.

One hopes that, next time, they'll take on the real challenge

Home Front



Allison Kaplan Sommer

Leave it to the Japanese to come up with another electronic device designed to improve the human condition

current method has its pitfalls.

When you walk into a party or a bar searching for Mr. or Ms. Right, the problem is you never know whether the handsome or pretty face across the room that you then strike up a conversation with belongs to someone who is truly available – and if they are, what kind of relationship they are looking for.

The opposite difficulty occurs when singles take out personal advertisements in the newspaper or on the Internet. In the ads, one can learn precisely what the advertisers are looking for, and a bit of concrete information about

of love and companionship: not simply locating another lonely heart, but learning to keep that relationship going longer than the batteries in the Lovegety last.

The logical follow-up device to the Lovegety would be a gadget that beeps periodically to remind owners to call their loved ones, buy them flowers, take them out to a romantic dinner – and, once in a while, initiate a conversation that doesn't involve who is taking out the garbage, or picking up the kids from school.

They could call it a "Lovekeepie." I have no doubt it would be a big seller.

A vast store of trickery

Upon his death in 1926, Harry Houdini bequeathed his enormous archive on magic to the Library of Congress and – guess what? – it disappeared. Michael Ollove delves into the history of illusion

In the 16th century, a British country gentleman named Reginald Scot published a book on magic tricks, hoping it would stem the tide of witch-hangings, a popular pastime just then in the English countryside.

Scot believed that if people understood that magic performances were the result of skillful – but purely human – manipulations, they would be less likely to see the hand of the Devil in every innocent event. Alas, Scot proved an innocent when it came to his own appreciation of the tenacity of ignorance.

Still, his courageous book was not an empty historical gesture. *Discoverie of Witchcraft* is believed to be the first book written in English to describe conjuring tricks. Four centuries after its publication, *Discoverie* is a treasured tome among the ranks of serious magicians.

And any number of them have visited the Library of Congress to do exactly what New York magician Jamy Ian Swiss did one day a few years back – hold a copy of Scot's pioneering work in his own two hands.

"I sat in the Rare Reading Room, and I can't tell you how exciting it was for me," said Swiss, who was delighted to find in *Discoverie* a description of magic tricks that are still performed to this day.

Swiss made the trip to the Library of Congress because, in addition to housing the papers of Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman and the Marquis de Lafayette, it also maintains perhaps the largest magic archive in the world. The library's magic collection contains more than 25,000 items, and, by one estimate, is worth more than \$2.5 million.

It contains artifacts – writings, posters, photographs or correspondence – concerning virtually every significant performing magician. The reason the library has this material at all is owing to one magician: the most illustrious practitioner of his craft in history.

UPON HIS death at age 52 in 1926, Harry Houdini bequeathed his significant holdings to the Library of Congress. In addition to being a master illusionist and incomparable escape artist, Houdini was probably the foremost magic scholar of his time.

"Nobody knew as much about magic in his time as Houdini," said Kenneth Silverman, a New York University English professor and author of a recent, definitive biography of Houdini. "Maybe only one or two people in history ever knew as much about magic as he did."

As a magic scholar, Houdini had amassed an enormous magic archive, with books and pamphlets dating back through the centuries. Upon his death, he willed the entire archive to the Library of Congress, along with correspondence, clippings, posters and promotional materials from his own career. (His magic apparatus went to his brother, a fellow magician.)

Houdini's legacy to the library was followed 30 years later by an even bigger gift. It came from two friends, John J. McManus, the wealthy American representative of Rolls Royce, and a New York ophthalmologist named Morris Young, who had been captivated by Houdini since childhood.

Together, McManus and Young were the most important magic collectors in the US, and in 1955 they decided to follow Houdini's lead by donating 20,000 items to the library.

SILVERMAN describes some of the library's "fabulous" holdings:

- *Hocus Pocus*, a how-to written by English magic dealer Henry Dean and first published in 1722. The American edition, published three years later, is believed to be the first conjuring text published in the US.

- *The Expositor*, written in 1805 by William Frederick Pinchbeck, revealed how he had taught a pig to perform a card trick. Pinchbeck decided to come clean after word spread that

his animals were satanically possessed.

- *Conjurer's Magazine*, published in 1791-92, is believed to be the first serial publication devoted to magic.

- Works by or about magicians Harry Kellar, Jean-Eugene Robert-Houdin, Howard Thurston, Hermann the Great and the Davenport Brothers.

The library is particularly rich in what is called Houdiniana, including the Bible used by Houdini's father, Rabbi M.S. Weiss (containing a rare signature of Houdini using his given name: Ehrich Weiss), and the earliest known piece of handwriting from Houdini: a postcard to his mother after he had run away from home at age 12: "Dear Ma, I am

going to Galveston (sic) Texas and will be home in a year. Your truant son, Ehrich Weiss."

For Houdini scholars, the Library of Congress is an imperative. "For anyone interested in Houdini, this stuff is absolutely irreplaceable," said Silverman. It was, however, displaceable, as he discovered to his great dismay when he first visited the library in 1992.

Silverman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer, was told that the library was unable to find much of its Houdini material.

"My reaction was, 'How can you allow 40 boxes of material to disappear?'" Silverman recalls.

He thought he would have to give up on his book. That's when a senior research librarian named Joan Higbee commenced a detective mission that ultimately led to the library's warehouse in Landover. There, in unmarked cardboard boxes, she found much of the missing material.

Young, who had donated much of the missing material, was understandably upset about the disappearing boxes.

"They said they were going to take care of it, but they took care of it by dumping it in some warehouse," he said.

But Higbee made amends for the library by spending much of the next four years reorganizing the entire collection in a way that would make it truly accessible for the first time. As a consequence, Higbee, whose expertise was in European literature and history, developed a passionate appreciation



Librarian Higbee, with some of the 'vanished' Houdiniana: She played detective. (Baltimore Sun)

for the rich history of magic.

"It was a collection of such depth and wonder... it was something that absolutely could not be put aside," she said.

As she dug deeper into the collection, Higbee came to perceive themes occupying magicians through the ages. From the earliest records, the documents discuss how particular tricks were accomplished, but they also reflect serious consideration of issues that continue to engage magicians: the psychology and ethics of magic, the relationship of the magician to the

audience, and to science.

Just as Scot sought to prove that magic was not the result of satanic intervention, Houdini in his day traveled the country to expose the fraud of spiritualism.

Even today there exists in Florida an institute founded by a magician, the Amazing Randy, which challenges any phenomenon that is claimed to be caused by supernatural forces.

"Magic," says Higbee, "is really a conversation transmitted across the generations." (Baltimore Sun)



The Houdini collection reveals that from the earliest times, magicians pondered issues that still engage them today – like the psychology and ethics of magic and the magician's relationship to his audience. (Tali Baziluz)

Healing the injured party

Dear Ruthie, A few months ago, I broke off my engagement to the woman who had been my girlfriend since junior high school. I just felt there was something missing, since I had never gone out with anybody else during all those years. I was feeling restless, and started being attracted to other women. This made me realize that I was not ready to get married. My girlfriend was heartbroken, even though I explained that it would be far worse to get married and make a mistake than to play the field a bit before making a decision based on comparison. I believe this is true for her also.

My problem is that I am like a member of her family by now, as she is of mine, and I have been invited to her brother's graduation party next month.

When my ex learned of my intention to attend the party, she went ballistic, and has been leaving me menacing messages on my answering machine. This really annoys me, because I am a friend of her brother's whether or not she and I stay together, and anyway, he invited me, and I see no reason

not to go. Does breaking up with someone mean all connections must be severed? I consider this to be a very backward attitude, which has been characteristic of my girlfriend all along. Should I give in to her demand that I stay away, even if I completely disagree with her outlook?

Exasperated Ex
Somewhere in the US

Dear Exasperated Ex, Before making a final decision about whether to attend the graduation party, you must examine your motives in being so keen to go. Whether or not your calling off the engagement will end up being a life-saver for your ex-girlfriend is irrelevant now. The fact is that she was the wounded party in the break-up, and obviously is in great pain. This is not surprising, given the long history the two of you share, and given the way in which each of you is considered a

member of the other's family. Your ex must be going through a period of mourning right now – not to mention one of extreme anger at you for having pulled the rug out from under her feet. This feeling may pass in time, but right now it is still fresh and warrants a little consideration on your part.

Even though it is you who made the decision to go out and play the field before tying any knots, it is likely that you, too, are experiencing some form of mourning. After all, your life has been connected to hers for a long time, and you almost committed to it last year. Perhaps this is the real reason behind your not wanting to be left out of her family festivities. You, too, seem to be experiencing a little separation anxiety, and fear that the choice you made is one you might not be able to reverse if and when you see fit to do so.

Dear Ruthie



Ruthie Blum

Given your history as someone who has had the same girlfriend since junior high school, it is unlikely that you are the risk-taking type where playing the field or separation are concerned.

Just as you consider the step you are taking to be beneficial for your girlfriend in the long run, as well as for yourself, I believe it would be beneficial to refrain from attending the party of a family to which you no longer belong. Though you were invited by the guest of honor, you should consider the repercussions which might follow as a result of keeping your relationship with your ex on a low flame.

Letter should be addressed to: 'Dear Ruthie,' POB 81, Jerusalem 91000. For E-mail: ruthie@post.co.il ('Dear Ruthie' also appears in *La Jerusalem* and in *City Lights on Fridays*.)

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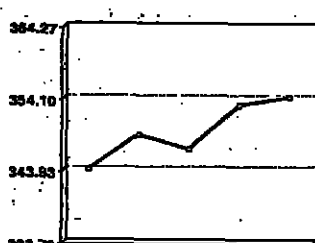
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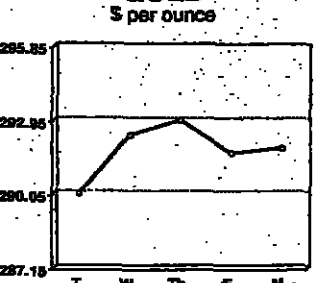
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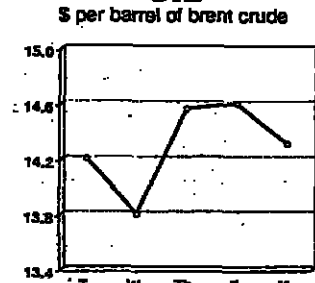
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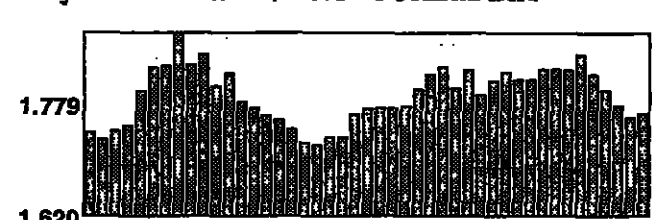
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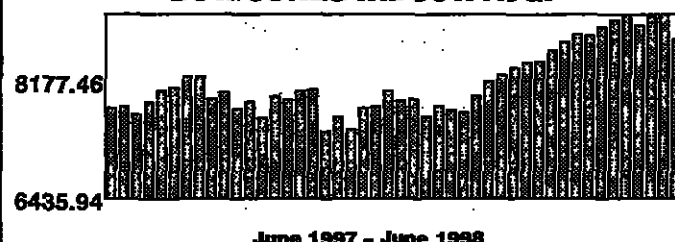
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Treasury to raise NIS 1.5b. in July

The Finance Ministry will raise NIS 1.5 billion in July, Accountant General Shai Talmon said yesterday. Details of the monthly program will only be released later this month.

David Harris

Zilberfarb to discuss Israel-UK fund

Treasury Director General Ben-Zion Zilberfarb sets off today for a four-day visit to Britain, where he will discuss with his opposite number Terry Burns the creation of a joint \$25 million advanced technologies fund. This is the latest stage in a process begun during British Prime Minister Tony Blair's recent visit here. Zilberfarb will then travel to the US, where he will participate in the annual conference of the BIRD fund.

David Harris

Record mission numbers expected in '98

A record 10,000 visitors are expected to visit here as members of 160 United Jewish Appeal-Council of Jewish Federations missions this year, the organization announced yesterday. In 1996, which was a particularly bad year, only 4,000 US Jews came on such missions, while the usual annual average is between 6,000 and 7,000, a spokesman for the organization said yesterday. Among the special groups which have been organized are those for singles, single parents, bar mitzva families and for mixed-marriage couples.

Haim Shapiro

14 UK companies check out Israel's potential

Representatives of 14 British companies arrived here yesterday on a five-day trade mission organized by the UK-based Northern Development Company. Among the industries represented are aerospace, print supply, and upholstery.

David Harris

Immigrants get compensation for stolen goods

The Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved the transfer of NIS 75 million from state funds for compensating immigrants who had money stolen as they were making aliyah. Of that total, a third will be released this year. The decision was in line with a commitment made to Yisrael Ba'aliyah during negotiations ahead of the 1998 state-budget vote.

David Harris

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AOL buys Mirabilis for \$287m.

By DAVID HARRIS

America Online (AOL) yesterday announced it has bought the Tel Aviv-based Internet chat company Mirabilis for \$287 million. The amount paid could increase to as much as \$407m, as AOL agreed that starting in 2001 it will make contingent payments of up to \$120m over three years, dependent on growth.

This is one of the biggest deals involving an Israeli high-tech firm.

More than 12 million people are registered as users of Mirabilis' ICQ instant communications and chat technology. ICQ allows Internet users to know when friends also are surfing and informs them in real time when they sign on. The system allows for people to chat, send messages and files, play on-line games or discuss business issues via the Internet.

"The acquisition of ICQ technology dramatically increases our presence on the Web," AOL

Chairman and CEO Steve Case said.

AOL said three key factors led the company to purchase Mirabilis: the ICQ software dashboard stays on a user's screen all the time; ICQ has one of the fastest growing and most loyal communities on the Internet; and ICQ has a strong international reach, further accelerating AOL's global expansion.

Mirabilis' services will remain free of charge and will retain the company's name.

Mirabilis President Sefi Vigiser said, "Combining forces with AOL will help accelerate the introduction of our next-generation client - the biggest technological leap that we've made to date - as well as speed future enhancements of the service. With our founding team continuing to guide the development of the service, ICQ will retain its pioneering spirit and dedication to our loyal users."

AOL said it does not expect the purchase to have a negative effect

on its earnings.

One of the key benefits for AOL, the company said, is that ICQ has tremendous appeal among young, technically sophisticated Web users and there is remarkably little overlap with AOL's other services.

Dulles, Virginia-based AOL is the world's top on-line service with a 60 percent market share. It was strengthened last year with the takeover of the No. 2 company, CompuServe. AOL's revenues totaled \$1.685 billion last year.



Getting ready for the World Cup

A Bangladeshi girl accompanies her brother on a rickshaw in Dhaka yesterday as they take home a color television. Electronics shops owners say that sales of televisions have more than trebled in the days preceding the World Cup.

(Reuters)

'97 bank profits up 43%

By Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

The five major banks recorded a combined 43.28 percent increase in profits to NIS 3.115 billion last year, according to Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles.

Tomorrow, Abeles will present his annual report, which will also state that banks must increase their cash reserves to cover potential losses, as their loan portfolios are accumulating high-risk loans to companies involved in takeovers.

The volume of foreign-currency denominated outstanding loans from the country's five largest banks rose 15.8% last year, the report states. Banks in 1997 lent NIS 5 billion shekels to companies to help finance the purchase of government-owned and private companies.

The increase in the banks' net profit stems from a revival in the capital market last year, adjustment of bank commissions and expansion of activities in the non-linked shekel sector.

Business results for 1997 show a continuing rise in profits for the five major banks, a trend which began in 1994.

However, about half the total increase posted last year in the banks' profit stems from one-time profits of NIS 475 million at Bank Leumi on the sale of surplus holdings.

The improvement in profits was also reflected in a sharp rise in the average return on capital, which last year amounted to 12%, the highest level of recent years. This is in comparison to 8.8% in 1996 and 8.4% in 1995.

Excluding the one-time profit at Bank Leumi, the banking system's average profitability was 10.2%.

1st quarter building starts down 21%

By DAVID HARRIS

Building starts were down 21 percent in the first quarter compared to the same period last year, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced yesterday.

Work on some 10,060 apartments got under way between January and March, compared to 10,550 in the previous quarter and 12,680 in the first three months of 1997.

The number of apartments completed in the first quarter fell to 11,970 from 14,970 in the same period last year and 17,660 in the

fourth quarter.

At the end of the first quarter, 84,200 were under construction, compared with 95,700 during the same period last year.

Activity in the construction sector is seen as a key indicator for the overall performance of the economy, and these latest figures would suggest the slowdown is still here, despite other more positive data in recent weeks.

In terms of geographical area, building starts in the first quarter covered 2.1 million square meters, while they filled 2.7 million last

year - a 23% fall.

Of the building starts in the first quarter, 73% were residential. Completed properties, meanwhile, covered 2.5 million square meters, a 0.1 million decrease from last March.

Of building work begun in the first quarter, 6,920 apartments were being in the private sector, down 26% from the same point last year. The remainder were in the public sector, registering a 6% drop.

At the same time there were 8,400 private building completions (-15%) and 3,750 in the public sector (-30%).

The figures were released on the same day the Construction and Housing Ministry said it believes only half the land the government expected to be sold for housing construction this year will actually be purchased by contractors. The government target is 60,000, following the failure to meet the 1997 figure of 50,000.

Meanwhile, Income Tax Commissioner Doron Levy said real estate deals were down 30% in the first five months of the year, compared to the January-May 1997 figure.

Wells Fargo, Norwest in \$34b. merger G-7 to weigh Russian help

By SAM ZUCKERMAN

SAN FRANCISCO (Bloomberg) - Wells Fargo & Co. and Norwest Corp. agreed to a \$34 billion merger in an attempt to better compete with BankAmerica Corp. and other US rivals that are building nationwide franchises.

Minneapolis-based Norwest will exchange 10 of its shares, worth about \$396.88, for each share of Wells Fargo, a 9 percent premium to its closing price on Friday of 363 1/4. "This gets Norwest a great franchise in the West Coast," said Charles Vincent, the co-director of equity research at PNC Bank Corp. "This is an area of great growth potential."

The merger gives Wells Fargo an opportunity to compete on a comparable scale to cross-town rival BankAmerica, and brings a broader perspective to a dominant regional bank.

The new bank will have about \$191 billion in assets and keep the

Wells Fargo name and its San Francisco headquarters. Norwest chairman and chief executive Richard Kovacevich will be chief executive and president of the new company. Wells Fargo chairman and chief executive Paul Hazen will be chairman.

Banks are merging at a record pace in the hopes of boosting profits by cutting costs and selling a wider array of financial services to more customers. BankAmerica, the only bank bigger than Wells Fargo in California, agreed to a \$60 billion merger with NationsBank Corp. Banc One Corp. is buying First Chicago NBD Corp. for \$30 billion.

The merger, which will create the US's seventh largest bank, will add Wells Fargo's dominant position in Internet banking, where it had 420,000 customers at the end of 1997, to Norwest's \$60 billion in mortgage originations and \$211 billion in mortgage servicing, tops

in the industry.

The merger is a strategic change for Norwest, which has been content to purchase small banks for hundreds of millions of dollars, rather than the billions that competitors such as US Bancorp and Banc One Corp. have been spending for larger strategic combinations.

Investors said integrating such a large combination could be a challenge for Kovacevich. "That'll also be a question that everyone will ask: Can the deal get done in terms of integration," said Scott Edgar, the director of research at Sift Trust Fund in Walnut Creek, California.

Analysts and investment bankers said Wells Fargo had been negotiating with Norwest's local Minneapolis rival, US Bancorp, about a possible merger over the last few months.

Vincent said US Bancorp might come in with its own offer for Wells Fargo. "It's quite possible that US Bancorp could come in with a higher offer," he said. US Bancorp officials couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

By NATALIA OLYNEC

MOSCOW (Bloomberg) - As the world's leading industrial nations this week discuss how to help Russia, they'll have to weigh the risk of a Russian default against the need to push the government to cut spending and collect more taxes.

Investors expect the Group of Seven or other lenders to provide \$5 billion to \$10 billion to Russia to help cover more than \$5 billion in debt payments this month and \$33 billion this year as the government runs short of cash. Expectations of an emergency loan drew some investors into Russian debt last week.

"The market has started to anticipate the (loan) package," said Frederik Lekman, who manages \$150 million at MFK Renaissance. "They will need it if things turn worse rapidly."

"It's always good to have something to lean against. It's more of a confidence booster," he said. G-7 officials have revealed no specific loan proposals and Russia insists it doesn't need a bailout.

The danger is that a bailout would create a "moral hazard" by misleading investors about Russian risk and the government about the need to reform its finances.

"The G-7 governments are... obsessively concerned with not creating moral hazard," said Eric Kraus, chief strategist at Regent European Securities in Moscow. "This could be a very dangerous game. Capital flight has been stopped by the expectation of (a loan) - if the market decides it's not in the cards, a violent reversal could occur, triggering a real crisis."

A meeting of deputy finance ministers from the G-7 nations today and tomorrow in Paris will focus mainly on Russia, said US Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin. President Boris Yeltsin is scheduled to arrive in Bonn today for two days of talks with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. German government and European Union officials said they'll support loans to Russia only through international lenders and only if the loans are tied to pressure on the Russian government to fundamentally reform its finances.

Manufacturers expect slowdown to continue

Jerusalem Post Staff

The economy is still in a state of

slowdown, according to the latest economic report from the Manufacturers Association. The report points to rising unemployment and declines in production in a variety of industries.

Among those worst hit are food, textiles, footwear, wood and furniture, machinery production, rubber and plastic, said the association's economics division head, Shuki Abramovitz.

The report comes days after the Treasury expressed a hope that recent macroeconomic indicators suggest a possible turnaround in the economy. Industrial production grew at an annualized 7.8 percent in February and March, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics.

In addition, there are signs that the slowdown in investments in factories and associated equipment is

bottoming out. In April, imports of investment goods rose 2%, after reductions in every month since September 1997.

Yet the manufacturers say otherwise. Unemployment, they claim, is increasingly a factor in industry. In some workplaces, including the footwear and leather industries, the workforce is down 5-6% on the second quarter last year.

The association does concede, however, that the electricity and electronics sectors have witnessed a 3-5% rise in the numbers of employees, with a 2% increase in the paper, printing and metal product industries.

During the first quarter, the public sector took on some 16,000 new staff, principally women, and laid off 10,000, most of whom were men.

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Still bullish

Stop worrying already! That's the message for US equity investors from two of Wall Street's most respected market strategists - Edward Kerschner of PaineWebber Group and Abby Joseph Cohen of Goldman Sachs & Co.

"Last week's market gyrations do not portend any real problems for the stock market," Kerschner insisted in a memo sent to clients on Sunday.

"Home on the Range: Higher Stock Prices Ahead," Cohen titled a report to clients on Monday.

Their words may not be much comfort to investors who own some of the individual stocks that have, in fact, been in steep decline in recent weeks. But Kerschner and Cohen are talking about the big picture, and primarily for the blue-chip Standard & Poor's 500 index companies.

Their views carry weight because both have been steadfastly - and correctly - bullish in recent years, even as the market has risen to levels that have given professional portfolio managers a collective lump in the throat.

Why not be worried about US stock prices today, given weak corporate earnings growth, rising turmoil in emerging markets and the Federal Reserve Board's potential trigger finger with interest rates, among other concerns? Here's how the two strategists make their case for staying in US equities overall, with the S&P 500 now off 3.3 percent from its record high set April 22.

Kerschner: Yes, corporate earnings growth has slowed. Nonetheless, the important distinction to be made - is that "earnings are unlikely to fall," the PaineWebber strategist says, referring to results for major US companies.

"We still look for earnings per share growth (for the S&P 500) of 5% to 10% in the second half of 1998 and into 1999," Kerschner says.

Second, he says, "The market's price-to-earnings ratio is unlikely to fall." Although blue-chip stocks are, by most reasonable estimates, priced at more than 20 times estimated 1998 earnings, on average - a historically high P/E - Kerschner maintains that "benchmarking against either inflation or bond yields, P/E's seem rational. The stock market remains essentially fairly valued..."

Your definition of a "normal" price for stocks may differ from Kerschner's, of course, but by his reckoning of value - measuring the market's height relative to earnings, inflation and interest rates - "stocks have not sold below 90% of normal P/E valuation since January 1991." In

other words, Kerschner is saying that this long bull run in the 1990s has been fully justified by the underlying fundamentals and that investors have responded to those fundamentals by refusing to let stocks fall more than 10% from "fair" value.

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Small firms, big problems

Though media attention has been focused on the multinationals, Asia's fiscal meltdown is also taking a toll on those US companies employing fewer than 500 workers

By EVELYN IRIANI

Sandy Futterman returned from a sales trip to Southeast Asia last fall with a list of prospective buyers and an uneasy feeling. His hunch was correct: Within a few weeks, even his most loyal customers began delaying or canceling orders.

"We went from selling tons to selling hundreds of pounds," said Futterman's wife, Hilda, who works with her husband at their small industrial coatings firm. "We're still reeling from it." Across the United States, small businesses such as Global Coatings in Austin, Texas, are shedding workers, slashing costs and desperately seeking new customers to offset the sudden disappearance of fast-growing new markets. Asia's fiscal meltdown has been particularly devastating to their bottom line because they lack the diversified markets and deep pockets of larger US companies competing overseas.

While recent headlines have focused on the impact of Asia's problems on America's name-brand multinationals, scant attention has been paid to the firms with fewer than 500 employees that make up the backbone of this country's trade sector. They represent a surprising 95.7 percent of all US exporters and contribute 30% of the value of all exports, according to a recent report by the Small Business Administration.

Size isn't always a negative. Confronted by the unexpected, small companies can sometimes react more quickly than their bigger, more bureaucratic competitors, according to Spencer Kim, president of CBOL Corp., a small aerospace components broker based in Los Angeles.

When the Asian financial crisis first hit Thailand last summer, CBOL moved quickly to minimize the damage. It quit signing contracts to reduce its exposure in the region and concentrated on helping its strongest customers stay in business by offering to help them obtain protection against additional foreign currency shifts.

Kim is hopeful he can ride out the recession in Asia without laying off any of his 160 employees.

"We are freer to make decisions, and it doesn't take committees and lots of meeting to make a change in direction," he said.

Others have not been as fortunate. Small firms are particularly vulnerable to a regional slowdown because they often focus their sales in one geographic area. The loss of one or two large contracts can wipe them out.

Hilda Futterman said even stepped-up sales in the US and Latin America have not offset the disappearance of Global Coatings' Asian business, which made up 75% of the firm's \$2 million in annual sales. To make ends meet, the firm has cut costs and laid off two of its four full-



Headaches continue on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange: Asia's economic crisis has been particularly devastating to small firms' bottom lines because they lack the diversified markets and deep pockets of larger US companies competing overseas.

time employees.

"It's really tough when your expenses are surpassing your income," said Futterman, who has taken a job as an office manager in the small family firm to save money.

Survival depends on finding new customers. But that isn't easy or cheap. Unlike multinational corporations that can shift resources within a global network, these small companies

usually have to start from ground zero.

That means participating in trade shows, finding new avenues in which to advertise their products, learning a new set of cultural and financial dos and don'ts and spending thousands of dollars on travel that may or may not pay off.

Small firms looking for funding to develop new markets, or to keep their old ones afloat, have

not always found their bankers to be sympathetic to their needs, according to Tom Teofilo, president of the World Trade Center Association of Los Angeles-Long Beach.

"Small companies have literally had the doors closed in their face," he said. "It's a historic problem." But Teofilo said US banks, both the large players and the community banks, in recent months have begun waking up to

the potential profits that can be made by serving this fast-growing sector of the trade community.

"Our operation recently put on an international banking symposium and 160 bank representatives showed up," he said. "Our organization, the World Trade Center, in the past four months, has probably acquired a half-dozen banks as new members."

LIZ LAGMANSON, vice president of Advanced Geosciences Inc., an Austin manufacturer of high-tech surveying equipment, said it can take several years to develop a new market for the firm's product, which carries a \$30,000 price tag.

"It's like throwing pearls into the water and waiting for them to grow," she said. "It's a long time before you see any results."

Advanced Geosciences is counting on its efforts at cultivating new markets in India and Latin America to begin paying off soon. That would help offset the loss of its Asia business, which accounted for 70% of sales last year. Many of its customers are government agencies whose budgets have been slashed since steep currency devaluations swept across Southeast Asia and South Korea, pushing governments and companies with large dollar-denominated debt to the edge of insolvency.

The Internet - where Advanced Geosciences has established a Web page to publicize its high-tech surveying tool - has proved to be an effective and low-cost vehicle for reaching customers around the world.

"South America is turning out to be our new Asia," Lagmanson said.

The steep currency declines in Southeast Asia were supposed to translate into lower production costs for importers such as Matthew Mulyanto, president and chief executive of Westwood International. His 36-employee firm, based in Chino, Calif., sells ceramic housewares to retailers such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc.

But Mulyanto, one of the nation's leading importers of ceramic coffee mugs, said his suppliers in the hard-hit countries of Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea have been unable to get bank financing to purchase raw materials. Earlier this year, he was forced to shift all his Southeast Asia manufacturing contracts to China.

That didn't solve all his problems. China has proved to be a high-quality, low-cost supplier. But being so dependent on one country - particularly one with a long history of rocky relations with the US - makes Mulyanto uncomfortable. So he has begun making trips to Eastern Europe and South America looking for additional manufacturing sources. "What happens if suddenly the relationship between the US and China should go sour?" he said. "I'm quite nervous right now." (Los Angeles Times)

US media empire Clear Channel tackles Europe

LONDON - Clear Channel Communications Inc., one of the US's richest and fastest-growing media empires, is ready to lasso Europe.

The Texan broadcaster's purchase of Britain's More Group Plc, expected to be completed next month, gives it Europe's second-biggest outdoor advertiser and a well-respected local management team. With billions of dollars to spend, Clear Channel could reshape European outdoor and broadcast media, analysts said.

"When you get the larger, better-capitalized players coming into the market then it very much acts as a catalyst for change," said Paul Richards, a media analyst at Pannure Gordon in London.

Clear Channel has already proven itself the most successful predator in the rough and tumble US media world. A loosening of US broadcast-ownership laws allowed it to gobble its way from 16 radio stations to 184 radio stations and 18 television stations in less than a decade.

The best example of its appetite for opportunity was its swift takeover of the billboard industry once it saw that billboards capture the same audience as radio - car drivers.

Within 18 months the company spent \$2.7 billion to buy two of the US's largest billboard companies. Its recent success in winning More Group, which builds billboards, bus shelters and other outdoor advertising structures in 22 countries, makes it the world's biggest outdoor advertiser.

All the while, Clear Channel's

stock has risen faster than Microsoft's, making it the darling of Wall Street analysts and giving it little reason to slow down its acquisition pace.

"They have a tremendous war chest," said William Meyers, an analyst at BancAmerica Robertson Stephens, who estimates Clear Channel could take on at least \$1.5b. in debt for acquisitions. "Given their stock performance they could readily tap the public markets if they needed more currency."

Meyers and other analysts expect Clear Channel to target radio stations in the same markets where More Group already owns billboards and other outdoor advertising.

The fact that More Group Chief Executive Roger Parry is already involved in radio as a board member of Golden Rose Communications Plc, owner of London radio station Jazz FM, gives Clear Channel a head start in the UK market.

Combining radio and billboards has been a huge success for the company in the US, enabling it to offer local advertisers a choice of media and to use vacant billboard space to promote its radio stations.

An added benefit is that radio and outdoor advertising in the US have proven to be less vulnerable to economic fluctuations than other media, suffering only one year of revenue decline in the last 30 years, said Chris Ensley, a broadcast analyst at Salomon Smith Barney in New York.

"I think they would look to do the same strategy that they've done in the US and implement that in Europe," Ensley said. (Bloomberg)

Auctions boom in Poland as the newly rich pounce on paintings, sculpture and furniture

By PIOTR BAZYLKO

WARSAW - Polish art auctions are packed and prices are soaring as a newly wealthy generation of business people rewards itself for success or seeks alternative investments.

"Ever more young people who have proved themselves in business are not afraid of putting themselves to the test at art auctions," said Jozef Grabski, head of the Sztuka auctioneers in Krakow, southern Poland.

The sums involved are small by world standards, especially as most works sold are by internationally lesser-known Polish artists.

All the pictures that went under the hammer in Poland in 1997 together fetched less than a third of the costliest picture worldwide last year, a portrait by Paul Cezanne of his wife which sold in New York for \$23.1 million.

But business is booming as interest spreads beyond a narrow circle of seasoned collectors and the first wave of local entrepreneurs who dominated the scene until recently.

"We're sending twice as many catalogs to clients as a year ago," says Zofia Krajewska-Szukalska at Warsaw's Agna Art.

Pictures, sculptures and furniture worth more than 25 million zlotys (\$7.2 million, 15 = 3.494 Polish zlotys) were auctioned in Poland last year, the auction houses say.

This turnover exceeded the dreams of all the houses whose business came alive in 1988, a year before the fall of Communism, with a first professional auction by enthusiasts who formed a pioneering firm called Uni-Art, today's Unicum.

Apart from the five major auction houses in Warsaw, Agna, Polswiss, Unicum, Rempex and Panorama, two new ones were founded last year - Ostoya in Warsaw and Sztuka in Krakow.

Everyone is counting on 1998 being even better for sales, and the first quarter is bearing them out - by the end of March, art objects worth nine million zlotys had been sold.

The 10-year-old market's record price for a single picture was also set in March by Leon Wyczolkowski's (1852-1936) huge canvas "Self portrait on a horse," which went at auction for 430,000 zlotys.

Agna's Krajewska-Szukalska thinks the sum might be exceeded by a prominent 19th or early 20th century painter this year and told Reuters several such pictures were on the horizon.

Art collector Slawomir Rawski said the Polish market might also be ready to snap up imported foreign works.

"I know of several sensational plans to import well-known works by West European artists," Rawski said.

According to Andrzej Ochalski of Unicum, art buyers in Poland are mainly wealthy business fig-

ures or firms and dealers, while cash-strapped public museums can only watch helplessly.

"There is a gaping hole where museum purchases are concerned. Museums have bought almost nothing in the last 10 years. They have no money," Ochalski said.

Canny buyers stand to make large profits on purchases. "Of course, you have to buy undervalued pictures, not ones that are currently fashionable," he said.

He cites the water-color by internationally regarded avant-garde artist Witkacy (Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, 1885-1939) called "Athletes are always right" which sold in 1991 for 12,000 zlotys and is now worth 100,000 to 150,000.

Or there was Witold Wojtkiewicz's (1875-1909) oil painting "The flowering meadow," bought in 1992 for 4,800 zlotys and now estimated at 40,000 to 50,000 zlotys.

AUCTIONEERS say their clients include banks and listed firms, keen on both investment and prestige.

"This is a fringe of our activities, but a strong one. Some banks are building up good collections of paintings," said Szukalska-Krajewska, who declined to reveal their names.

"These are not necessarily in Warsaw and in fact they are often based outside the capital," she said.

Banks are often discreet about

their art purchases.

"Most banks did not even reply to a questionnaire we sent asking about art investments," said Pawel Nowacki, a journalist at the Zycie daily who specializes in covering the art market.

The survey did reveal that Wielkopolski Bank Kredytowy buys pictures, mainly from the "Paris school" of artists of Polish origin who worked in France early this century and also Polish works from the 20-year period between the two world wars.

The agricultural Bank Gospodarki Zwyznosciowej (BGZ) has bought at auction a picture which is to be the pride of its new headquarters, said spokeswoman Agnieszka Jaworska.

Bank Wspolpracy Regionalnej (BWR) in Krakow favors contemporary art - it organizes exhibitions in its buildings and buys one picture by each of the artists displayed.

Rawski, co-owner of a company which trades debt, is one of the few to admit seeing art as an investment.

"I buy art because the profitability of these investments is attractive - the thing is not to buy fashionable pictures," he said. "To make money from art you have to anticipate the market, not ride the crest of the wave." He said the trendiest painters recently were the "Munich school" of Polish artists, who worked in the German city in the second half of the last century, and these were over-valued.

Instead he is betting on avant-garde artists of the inter-war period and 1940s, like Tadeusz Kantor (1915-1990).

One obstacle to the market's development is the official curbs on exporting art and antiques from before 1945.

The policy is understandable in Poland, which lost much of its rich heritage during wildly destructive German and Soviet invasions during World War II.

But it means that any foreigners tempted to try the local art market may have to leave their purchases in the country.

There is a dark side to the growing fascination with art collection - since the start of 1997 burglars have stolen more than 160 pictures worth more than a million zlotys in the old university city of Krakow, chiefly from homes of intellectuals.

Police spokeswoman Jolanta Maciejewska said three gangs had been caught so far but only around 20 pictures had been recovered, while thieves were getting slicker and greedier.

Their booty includes paintings from the school of Delacroix, Flemish 17th century works and major Polish artists like the 19th and 20th century Koszak family.

"At first thieves took only some pictures from homes they burgled, often worthless ones. But after the press began reporting how much paintings can be worth, they have been stealing everything they can find on the walls," she said. (Reuters)

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10.125	-0.125
12.1875	+1.0625
28.875	-0.1875

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WILL SUCCESS BREED MORE SUCCESS? - French Open champion Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, clad in a Spanish team jersey, poses with Spain's World Cup coach Javier Clemente (right) and defender Miguel Angel Nadal.

Sanchez-Vicario hopes Spain can take another trophy from France

CHANTILLY, France (AP) - Wearing the red and yellow Spanish soccer team jersey, French Open winner Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario said yesterday she hoped Spain can take home another trophy from France this year - the World Cup.

"Hopefully we can all celebrate again in Paris," the tennis star said when she visited the Spanish team hotel outside this chateau town just north of Paris.

"This could be Spain's year. Winning the World Cup would be the knockout punch," Sanchez-Vicario, who won her third Roland Garros on Saturday by beating Monica Seles, posed with the full Spanish squad on the steps of the Blue Green Hotel wearing a team jersey given to her by striker Juan Pizzi.

She then held up a miniature replica of the tennis

trophy she won and kissed it to the cheers of the team and journalists gathered.

"I wanted to wish them the best of luck and if my calendar allows me to get to a game, I will," said Sanchez-Vicario. She said that the team had greeted her chanting "Champion, Champion" when she entered the hotel.

The Barcelona-born tennis player said she would set about immediately preparing for Wimbledon in two weeks time.

Spanish defender and friend Miguel Angel Nadal said her victory together with Carlos Moya's in the men's tournament on Sunday had boosted the team's optimism.

"Hopefully all this success is contagious," Nadal said.

Swimmer Halika immersed in gold

By HEATHER CHAFF

Twenty-year-old Mickey Halika has won four medals, including two golds, on the Grand Prix swim circuit (short-course pool).

In Monaco last week Halika became the first Israeli ever to win a gold medal on this circuit, clinching the 400 meters individual medley with a new Israeli record of four minutes, 22.70 seconds. His time was 12-hundredths better than his own previous record.

His second gold medal and win over the world champion in this distance, Dutchman Marcel Wouda, came in Barcelona where he clocked 4:23:18, which left Wouda in second place.

Wouda had chosen not to compete in Monaco.

Along with his gold medals, Halika has also collected two bronze medals in the 200m individual medley, his less preferred distance.

In Monaco he clocked 2:06:07 and

in Barcelona his time was 2:06:29.

Anja Gostamelsky is the second sensation in the national squad, picking up a silver medal and breaking no fewer than four national records in the two meets.

In Monaco Gostamelsky set a new time of 2:04:96 in the 200m freestyle, finishing tenth overall. Her next record came in the 100m freestyle where her time of 57:71 placed her sixth overall.

Gostamelsky continued to shatter her own records in Barcelona, finishing second in the 200m freestyle with another new national record of 2:03:63, cutting over one second off her Monaco time.

Again in the 100m freestyle, she bettered her time from Monaco, touching the poolside in 57:52 seconds in the heats. In the final, she finished fifth with a time of 57:66.

Halika now continues to Cannes, France for the next round of the Grand Prix circuit which opens today.

Rock star apologizes over night out with Gascoigne

LONDON (AP) - Rock star Rod Stewart publicly apologized yesterday for taking part in a late-night drinking session with Paul Gascoigne, an incident which may have contributed to the player being axed from the England World Cup squad.

Stewart and Gascoigne were photographed leaving a trendy London nightclub May 14 on one of Gascoigne's nights out before he was dropped by England coach Glenn Hoddle.

Stewart, an ardent Scotland fan, issued the apology through the Sun newspaper.

"Had I known the outcome I would have said, 'No drinking for you tonight Paul.' But my friend Paul Gascoigne can't have a drink."

Stewart said he admired but hardly knew him - don't write him off just yet.

Stewart said he had given Gascoigne a lift home, and then gone straight home.

"In hindsight, if I could turn back the hands of time, I wish there had been another way out of the restaurant but there wasn't without the photographers following us and having a field day," he said.

"I apologize to Glenn and the team and wish them well in the World Cup. This is a man I admire but hardly know and I'm absolutely devastated for him - don't write him off just yet."

SPORTS

in brief

Rain delays Graf's return

BIRMINGHAM (Reuters) - Heavy rain washed out Steffi Graf's comeback hopes yesterday.

The former world No. 1, who has played only twice in the last 12 months because of injury, hopes to prove her fitness ahead of Wimbledon at this week's Edgbaston women's tournament.

She will now play tomorrow.

The 28-year-old seven times Wimbledon champion last appeared at the Birmingham event 14 years ago, in the doubles.

"I spent last week practising in London, but now I want to play as many matches as I can before Wimbledon," Graf said.

Since her singles success at Wimbledon in 1996, Graf has struggled with knee, ankle and hamstring injuries.

Her last court appearance was at Indian Wells, California in March when she was forced to retire during the semifinals.

Korda, Krajicek advance in Halle

HALLE, Germany (AP) - Top-seeded Petr Korda, still fighting a flu, advanced into the second round of the Gerry Weber Open yesterday by struggling to a two-set victory over Germany's Kevin Krawinkel.

The Czech player, who lost five kilos while sick at the French Open, beat Krawinkel 6-1, 7-6 (7-5) at the \$875,000 grass court event.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the No. 2 seed and defending champion, and No. 3 Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands both started slowly but recovered to claim three-set victories.

Krajicek, the 1996 Wimbledon winner, ousted Vincent Spadea of the US, 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, while the Russian stopped Andrei Medvedev of the Ukraine, 1-6, 7-5, 6-1.

Sweden's Magnus Larsson also reached the second round by sweeping Austria's Thomas Muster, 6-3, 6-2.

Boris Becker said he will use his performance at the grass event to gauge if he's ready to play Wimbledon, starting June 22. "On Friday, I will announce if I will play Wimbledon or not," said Becker.

Bulgar soldiers get officers' TVs for World Cup

SOFIA (AP) - In an attempt to keep army discipline high during the World Cup, Bulgaria's defense ministry has ordered television sets removed from the offices of commanders to soldiers' barracks, private Nova TV reported yesterday.

Over the weekend, the TV station broadcast the removal of several television sets from offices in the ministry building in Sofia. A duty officer was quoted as saying 130 television sets would be removed from the capital alone.

"This is a smart move. Otherwise the barracks will be empty during the games of the national team," said Stoyan Garvanov, 23, who was doing his compulsory military service during the last World Cup in 1994.

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL - Monday's results: St. Kilda 21.11 (137) def. Richmond 16.14 (110), North Melbourne 19.12 (126) def. Collingwood 13.19 (97).

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ISRAELI FESTIVAL

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Trevor Pinnock leads his English Concert ensemble and choir in Handel's monumental and most beloved *Messiah* tonight at the Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv and tomorrow at the Sherover Theater in Jerusalem (8).

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Pianist Milka Laks, bass player Peter Mark, accordionist Eitan Shapiro, and flamenco dancers present an hour of sizzling tango music today (9) at the Tel Aviv Museum.

The Haifa Music Festival opens today (8:30) with a chamber music concert for flute, harp and strings in which flautist Marcello Ehrlich and harpist Efrat Lavri play music by Mozart, Schmitke, Debussy and others at the Yad Labanin House.

FILM

ADINA HOFFMAN

**** **BOOGIE NIGHTS** - Paul Thomas Anderson's picture, about the Southern California porn industry in the late Seventies and early Eighties, is a live-wire piece of moviemaking - funny, searching and often quite sad. The film has, too, its creator's ambition and precocity to recommend it: at age 26, with just one other movie (*Hard Eight*) to his credit, Anderson has a fuller and more nuanced vision of how to spin a rich web of characters, create convincing period atmosphere and tell a story than many directors twice his age. There is, to be sure, something inherently ironic about treating the seamy, small-time world of flesh-film production as epic, but Anderson is careful not to exploit his sensational material.



'Boogie Nights' looks at the Southern California porn industry in the late Seventies and early Eighties.

He neither moralizes nor glamorizes. Instead, he brings the wits of a clever anthropologist to bear on his characters' coke-snorting, dumb talk and casual sex. The movie falls off a bit in the second half but still marks a dynamic start to Anderson's career. With Burt Reynolds, Julianne Moore, Mark Wahlberg and a large, talented supporting cast. (Children under 18 not admitted: ID will be checked.)

ENGLISH THEATER

HELEN KAYE

Bertold Brecht's fable *The Good Person of Szechuan* asks whether goodness is even possible in this world. When Shen Te (Helen Lesnick) gets a bit of good luck because she's been good to a trio of visiting gods, she has to invent a wicked brother so that she can go on doing good despite rapacious neighbors. But then love rears its irrational head... The Tel Aviv Community Theater production is directed by Suchinta Wichesooriya. Tonight and tomorrow at Tel Aviv's Yad Labanin at 8:30 p.m. Tickets: (03) 524-6412.

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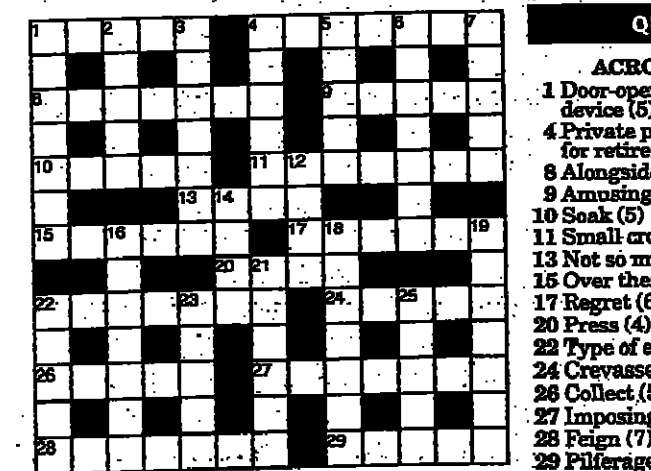
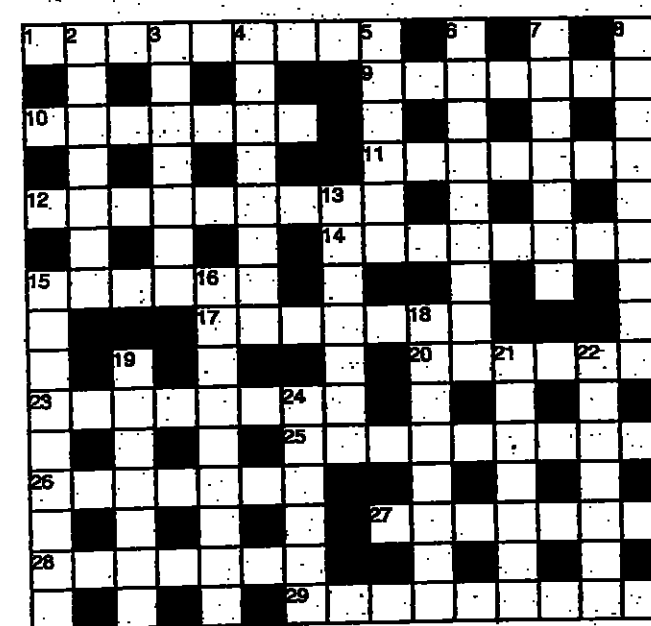
WINNING CARDS

Yesterday's final Happy's daily chance drawing

9 8 9
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CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 An isolated community lives without scandal (9)
 - 2 Proof the head should carry (7)
 - 3 Bad accident caused by many a man in drink (5-2)
 - 4 The crossword again for (8)
 - 5 Plain-speak with depressed (9)
 - 6 A pen responsible for the big hold-up in Egypt (5,3)
 - 7 Have a fling, taking in a show (5)
 - 8 Chaste characters needing money to get a bag (7)
 - 9 Representative? A member scoffed (6)
 - 10 Appearance of coppers round about head of state (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 A particular individual (7)
 - 2 Reason for strengthening attachment? (7)
 - 3 Woman doctor out of order in America (8)
 - 4 Pleasurable activities for good losers (6)



SOLUTIONS

RECENTAL SPIRITURE
1. INVENTION 2. SNAG 3. UNDEVELOPED 4. UNDEVELOPED 5. UNDEVELOPED 6. UNDEVELOPED 7. UNDEVELOPED 8. UNDEVELOPED 9. UNDEVELOPED 10. UNDEVELOPED 11. UNDEVELOPED 12. UNDEVELOPED 13. UNDEVELOPED 14. UNDEVELOPED 15. UNDEVELOPED 16. UNDEVELOPED 17. UNDEVELOPED 18. UNDEVELOPED 19. UNDEVELOPED 20. UNDEVELOPED 21. UNDEVELOPED 22. UNDEVELOPED 23. UNDEVELOPED 24. UNDEVELOPED 25. UNDEVELOPED 26. UNDEVELOPED 27. UNDEVELOPED 28. UNDEVELOPED 29. UNDEVELOPED 30. UNDEVELOPED 31. UNDEVELOPED 32. UNDEVELOPED 33. UNDEVELOPED 34. UNDEVELOPED 35. UNDEVELOPED 36. UNDEVELOPED 37. UNDEVELOPED 38. UNDEVELOPED 39. UNDEVELOPED 40. UNDEVELOPED 41. UNDEVELOPED 42. UNDEVELOPED 43. UNDEVELOPED 44. UNDEVELOPED 45. UNDEVELOPED 46. UNDEVELOPED 47. UNDEVELOPED 48. UNDEVELOPED 49. UNDEVELOPED 50. UNDEVELOPED 51. UNDEVELOPED 52. UNDEVELOPED 53. UNDEVELOPED 54. UNDEVELOPED 55. UNDEVELOPED 56. UNDEVELOPED 57. UNDEVELOPED 58. UNDEVELOPED 59. UNDEVELOPED 60. UNDEVELOPED 61. UNDEVELOPED 62. UNDEVELOPED 63. UNDEVELOPED 64. UNDEVELOPED 65. UNDEVELOPED 66. UNDEVELOPED 67. UNDEVELOPED 68. UNDEVELOPED 69. UNDEVELOPED 70. UNDEVELOPED 71. UNDEVELOPED 72. UNDEVELOPED 73. UNDEVELOPED 74. UNDEVELOPED 75. UNDEVELOPED 76. UNDEVELOPED 77. UNDEVELOPED 78. UNDEVELOPED 79. UNDEVELOPED 80. UNDEVELOPED 81. UNDEVELOPED 82. UNDEVELOPED 83. UNDEVELOPED 84. UNDEVELOPED 85. UNDEVELOPED 86. UNDEVELOPED 87. UNDEVELOPED 88. UNDEVELOPED 89. UNDEVELOPED 90. UNDEVELOPED 91. UNDEVELOPED 92. UNDEVELOPED 93. UNDEVELOPED 94. UNDEVELOPED 95. UNDEVELOPED 96. UNDEVELOPED 97. UNDEVELOPED 98. UNDEVELOPED 99. UNDEVELOPED 100. UNDEVELOPED

Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Hammer, 2 Teeth, 3 Bravo, 4 Pattern, 5 Tidings, 6 Enter, 7 Pursue, 8 Island, 9 Rider, 10 Rostrum, 11 Agility, 12 Rider, 13 Sympa, 14 Replete.
DOWN: 1 Habit, 2 Menander, 3 Thore, 4 Repeat, 5 Tatters, 6 Event, 7 Hundred, 8 Perhaps, 9 Sardine, 10 Abridge, 11 Prayer, 12 Feign, 13 Strip, 14 Merge.

QUICK CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Door-opening device (6)
 - 2 Private provision for retirement (7)
 - 3 Alongside (7)
 - 4 Amusing (5)
 - 5 Soak (5)
 - 6 Small crown (7)
 - 7 Not so much (4)
 - 8 Over there (6)
 - 9 Regret (6)
 - 10 Press (4)
 - 11 Type of engine (7)
 - 12 Crevasse (5)
 - 13 Collect (5)
 - 14 Imposing (7)
 - 15 Peign (7)
 - 16 Filigree (5)
- DOWN**
- 1 Rumor (7)
 - 2 Courage (6)
 - 3 Specimen (7)
 - 4 Top-floor rooms (6)
 - 5 Pleasant (5)
 - 6 Enormous (7)
 - 7 Sailing-boat (5)
 - 8 Norwegian capital (4)
 - 9 Sire (4)
 - 10 Tail (7)
 - 11 Very old (7)
 - 12 Storm (7)
 - 13 Look at (6)
 - 14 Vagrant (5)
 - 15 Children (5)
 - 16 Love (5)

TV

CHANNEL 1 (11)

6:30 News Flash
6:31 News in Arabic
6:45 Good Morning Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV (11)

8:00 Computer Science
8:30 Art Workshop
9:00 Science and Nature
10:00 Programs for the very young
11:00 English
12:00 French
12:30 Science and Technology
13:00 Geography
13:30 Animation
15:00 Pretty Butterfly

CHANNEL 1 (11)

15:30 Eilat and Lily and Zed
15:35 X Men
16:00 Byker Grove
16:20 Caprice
16:58 New Evening
17:34 Broadcast
Mobile Unit
18:15 News in English

ARABIC PROGRAMS

18:30 Apropos
19:00 News

HEBREW PROGRAMS

18:30 News
18:31 The Simpsons
18:32 The Simpsons
18:33 The Simpsons
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Platini: French authorities don't care about World Cup

PARIS (AP) — Michel Platini, co-president of the World Cup organizing committee, says French authorities have turned their back on the soccer tournament and aren't providing enough support.

"France has done what it had to do, but nothing more," Platini said in an interview published yesterday by the newspaper *Le Parisien*.

"Take the big party in Paris on 'Day One,' for example. Can you believe that it's been hard to get authorizations? They don't give a damn," he was quoted in the interview.

Platini said it had cost 50 million francs (\$8.3 million) to organize festivities tonight — "Day One" — featuring huge processions and concerts around the capital.

The tournament kicks off tomorrow with the opening match between Brazil and Scotland at Stade de France stadium in the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis.

"Not everybody feels concerned by this event. For example the Culture Ministry doesn't give a damn. We have no links with the personality of the (local) mayor," he was quoted saying.

Jazz blown away in Windy City

Utah's point total in 96-54 loss is lowest since shot clock

CHICAGO (AP) — The blowout was so thorough and lopsided it made history.

The Utah Jazz broke the record for fewest points in a game since the inception of the shot clock as they were humbled 96-54 Sunday by the Chicago Bulls in Game 3 of the NBA Finals.

"It's an awesome score to look at. It's overwhelming in that respect," Bulls coach Phil Jackson said.

It was a wretched, sickly effort that shattered plenty of records. No one had ever lost by this many points (42) in the Finals, no one had ever made so few field goals (21) and no one had ever scored so few points in a second half (23).

But the one number that stood out was the 54 points. Over thousands and thousands of games, no NBA team had ever scored so few.

"Damn, that's all I can say. Wow," said Greg Foster of the Jazz. "We played scared and overanxious." "It had to happen sometime to someone. It's too bad it happened to us," Greg Ostertag said.

Utah's 54 points broke the NBA record of 55 set earlier this season by the Indiana Pacers and was 17 fewer than the Finals record of 71 by Syracuse in 1955 and Houston in 1981.

The Jazz scored only 14 points in the first and third quarters, 17 in the second and nine in the fourth. It was so bad that the Bulls were actually doubled over laughing as the fourth quarter wound down.

"Everybody had a good time out there," Michael Jordan said. "We came out and played hard. We put the effort and intensity in and as a result we could relax a little in the fourth quarter."

The victory gave Chicago a 2-1 lead in the best-of-7 series, with Game 4 set for tomorrow night.

That will give the Jazz two full off days to ponder their plight and try to figure out how they could become so hideous so quickly.

And this time, they can't blame Karl Malone. After shooting 14-

for-41 over the first two games of the series, Malone made his first six shots and finished 8-for-11 for 22 points.

But the rest of the team shot a combined 13-for-59, with Howard Easley (0-for-6), Bryon Russell, Greg Ostertag (1-for-7 each) and Jacque Vaughn (0-for-6) among the biggest offenders.

"We just didn't come ready to play," Malone said. "We got an old-fashioned butt-kicking. If this one don't wake us up, nothing will."

The Jazz also gave a new meaning to the term sloppy, finding every way imaginable to turn the ball over. Utah, which had 13 turnovers in Game 1 and 20 in Game 2, had 26 turnovers this time — including seven by Malone and five by John Stockton — which led to 22 Chicago points.

"Our guys came out and had no fight at all," Utah coach Jerry Sloan said. "They got all the loose balls and all the rebounds."

The Bulls got bigger-than-usual contributions from Ron Harper and Scottie Pippen and 24 points out of Jordan. Toni Kukoc added 16 points, Scottie Pippen and Burrell had 10 each and every player on the team scored at least two.

It was so one-sided that Jordan amused himself during a fourth-quarter timeout by clowning with court-side reporters and watching the scoreboard video screen as fans did a limbo dance.

Malone sat out the entire fourth, just like Jordan, and watched Chicago go ahead by as many as 42 as the Bulls topped the old record margin of 35 by the Washington Bullets against Seattle in 1978.

Chicago also surpassed its own team record of a 33-point margin of victory, set in Game 1 of the 1992 Finals against Portland.

The Bulls broke this one open with a pair of first-half runs, a 12-0 spurt bridging the first and second quarters and a 12-2 run to close the first half that gave Chicago a 49-31 halftime lead.

So complete was Utah's breakdown that the Jazz let the Bulls

make two steals in the final six seconds of the second quarter.

Kukoc hit a corner jumper to make it 47-31, and Burrell swiped the inbounds pass. He missed a jumper and the Jazz rebounded, but Harper quickly stole the ball again and Burrell went to the free throw line for two more points after Stockton committed a loose-ball foul with 0.3 seconds left.

The lead reached 23 early in the third, 38 late in the third and was at least 30 for most of the fourth.

With 2:21 left, Jud Buechler's second 3-pointer of the night gave the Bulls a 40-point lead.

Malone hit Utah's first five shots and scored his team's first 10 points en route to shooting 6-for-6 for the quarter.

But his teammates combined to shoot 1-for-16 — including 0-for-4s for Russell, Ostertag and Jeff Hornacek — and the Bulls closed the quarter with a 8-0 run to lead 17-14 going into the second quarter.

Pippen scored the next two baskets to extend the run to 12-0, and the Bulls would go ahead by a dozen points twice in the quarter — the second time at 41-29 on a fastbreak layup by Kukoc following Malone's first miss — an air-ball baby hook.

Utah's frustration started boiling over from Malone vehemently arguing on offensive foul that negated his seventh straight basket to Sloan going ballistic as the referees called 1-4 of the first 20 fouls on his team.

By the end, all the Jazz could do was sit quietly on the bench.

Utah 14 17 14 9-54
Chicago 17 32 23 24-56
Utah (54) Russell 0-7 3-4 5, Malone 8-11 5-6, 22, Ostertag 1-7 0-0 2, Stockton 1-4 0-0 2, Hornacek 3-8 0-0 6, Easley 0-6 0-0 0, Foster 0-2 0-0 0, Anderson 3-8 1-2 0, Morris 2-3 1-2 5, Carr 0-2 0-0 0, Kneale 2-2 0-0 4, Vaughn 0-6 0-0 0.
Totals 21-70 11-14 54.
Chicago (56) Pippen 5-10 0-1 10, Kukoc 7-12 2-16, Longley 3-8 2-4 8, Harper 3-8 2-4 8, Jordan 7-14 10-17 24, Rodman 1-3 0-0 2, Burrell 4-5 2-2 10, Kerr 2-5 0-0 0, Buechler 2-3 0-0 5, Brown 1-3 0-0 2, Simpson 1-2 0-2 2, Wennington 1-3 0-0 2. Totals 37-76 18-28 56.
3-point goals—Utah 1-0, Anderson 1-1, Hornacek 0-1, Russell 0-2, Easley 0-2, Morris 0-1, Chicago 4-11, Buechler 2-3, Kerr 2-4, Pippen 0-1, Harper 0-1, Kukoc 0-2. Fouled out—Morris, Rodman—Utah 45 (Ostertag 3), Chicago 54 (Harper 19, Anderson—Utah 16 (Stockton 7), Chicago 25 (Harper 7). Total fouls—Utah 28, Chicago 19. A-23, B-4.



CASTING AN EVIL SPELL — Bulls' Michael Jordan applies pressure as Utah's John Stockton passes ball in second-period action.

Blatter elected FIFA president

PARIS (AP) — Sepp Blatter, a late candidate who waged a globe-trotting campaign, was elected yesterday as president of FIFA, the first change at the top of soccer's world body in almost a quarter century.

In balloting two days before the start of the World Cup, Blatter defeated Lennart Johansson when the Swedish president of UEFA conceded after the first round.

"The game is over," Johansson said. "I wish Mr. Blatter luck." The comments ended a brief but nasty campaign filled with mudslinging and heavy spending, and Blatter sought quickly to make sure the fighting ended.

"There may have been a few fouls, but we never tackled from behind," the Swiss said. "Now we need to think of what is fair."

Neither man received the two-thirds vote needed for a first-ballot victory, but Blatter piled up a clear majority, 111-80, and Johansson would have needed a massive defection in the second round, when a simple majority would have won.

Joao Havelange, the Brazilian industrialist who has been FIFA's president since 1974, backed Blatter's candidacy and openly applauded his deputy's pre-vote speech. Having been engaged in a long feud with Johansson, he appeared to avoid acknowledging the Swede's.

Johansson and Blatter, general secretary of FIFA, accused each other of being puppets for other interests, and spent more than \$1 million combined on very public campaigns that usually are waged quietly and privately.

After Johansson's concession, Blatter and Havelange appeared before the FIFA Congress. Havelange called Johansson "a gentleman," although the defeated challenger was clearly bitter after the vote.

"The result is there, consequently he is the winner and we will have to cooperate for the good of the game," Johansson said. "But we're not dropping our program. I'm loyal to the president but I'm not going to obey everything he says." Blatter appeared to hold onto his voting blocs in Asia and the Americas, and cut deeply into Johansson's strongholds of Europe and Africa.



NEW BOSS — Sepp Blatter acknowledges the applause of the FIFA congress after hearing that he had been elected as the body's new president in Paris yesterday.

Both contenders had similar platforms stressing a more open and member-oriented FIFA. But Blatter appeared to make inroads with proposals such as all but promising that the 2006 World Cup would be held in Africa if he were elected president.

Johansson may have hurt himself with his open support of Germany for the 2006 World Cup, angering the English who are also bidding for the tournament.

Blatter, who formally joined the race just 10 weeks ago, and Johansson, the sole candidate for more than a year before that, both had said in recent days that they were confident of victory.

Each had surrounded himself with soccer stars of the past, with Pele supporting Johansson and Michel Platini backing Blatter. Each of the endorsements was in keeping with the personal nature of the campaign — Pele has had a long-running feud with Havelange, his Brazilian countryman, while Platini is co-chairman of the French

World Cup and has been reluctant to share any stage with Johansson.

"I supported the man who I believe will change the face of football in the future," Platini said. Blatter has said he wanted to make the job, a traditionally part-time and unpaid post, a full-time, well-paid position.

It already is one of the two most powerful positions in international sports, perhaps even more so than the presidency of the International Olympic Committee.

Name-calling and personal attacks have been prominent in this campaign. Johansson has accused Blatter of stealing his platform and acting as a straw man for Havelange; Blatter, in turn, has said that Johansson was a puppet of the German soccer federation and Antonio Matarrese, the powerful head of the Italian federation who probably would take over at UEFA if the Swede is elected FIFA president.

Rain forces Edgbaston Test to be abandoned

BIRMINGHAM (AP) — Rain spoiled any chance of a result in the first cricket Test between England and South Africa at Edgbaston yesterday.

Play was abandoned due to persistent rain, resulting in a draw and preventing what should have been the most eventful day of the five-day match.

Both teams went into the last day with high hopes of a win but England got nowhere with their overnight 170 for eight, as the wicket square remained under cover until the match was abandoned.

England enjoyed an overall lead of 289 going into the final day. Umpires David Shepherd and Russell Tiffin finally called off play at 2:20 p.m. local time, the cut-off time for a rain-affected last day.

Both captains — Alec Stewart and Hansie Cronje — consented.

"We were the better of the two sides," Stewart said later.

"We dominated the game despite losing the toss."

It was only the fourth time a day's play has been abandoned without a ball bowled in 34 Tests at Edgbaston — the last occasion was six years ago when the first day of the Test between England and Pakistan was washed out.

Yesterday's washout came as a crucial blow to either side's hopes of taking an early lead in the five-match series.

The first four days were highlighted by a brilliant century by former England skipper Mike Atherton and an equally good innings by Jonty Rhodes.

England batted into a commanding position by scoring 462 in their first innings and South Africa, largely due to a steady innings by Rhodes, just managed to limp past the follow-on mark before being bowled out for 343.

The Test also marked the return of Dominic Cork after a chronic hip injury kept him out of the England side.

Cork took 5-93 to keep the South African first innings under check until Rhodes came to the rescue with a fighting 95.

Stewart, who took over from Atherton, praised the former skipper's 103 and said: "He showed a lot of character, and has shown us what he's capable of."

"This match has given us the confidence we need for a hard and tough series like this," he added.

Cronje felt his strike bowlers were short of a "good rhythm" going into the game, and it will be an area the visitors will be working on in the 10 days before the second Test at Lord's.

"What we need is contribution from the top order and a good rhythm from our medium pacemen," Cronje said.

He said both Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock were world-class bowlers and it was too early to write them off after one Test.

South Africa failed to make use of a good toss they won when England finished the first day losing just one wicket.

"That was the key to the match," Cronje said. "We let go of the opportunity."

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EGYPT

EUROPE WEATHER TODAY

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

City	Today		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Athens	21/8	13/5	21/8	13/5	21/8	13/5	21/8	13/5
Berlin	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
London	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Paris	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Rome	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Madrid	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Amsterdam	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Brussels	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Copenhagen	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Moscow	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Warsaw	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Vienna	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Budapest	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Stockholm	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Helsinki	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Tallinn	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Riga	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Vilnius	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Kyiv	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Minsk	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Warsaw	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Prague	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Bratislava	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Bucharest	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Sofia	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Belgrade	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Zagreb	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Ljubljana	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Trieste	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Genoa	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Naples	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Rome	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Milan	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Venice	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Padua	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Trento	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Bolzano	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Innsbruck	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Zurich	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Basel	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Geneva	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Lausanne	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Neuchâtel	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Yverdon	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Basel	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Winterthur	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Dornach	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
St. Gallen	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Appenzel	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Lucerne	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5	20/16	10/5
Uri	20/16	10						